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The Swiss Brethren and the Dutch Mennonites: A Particular Study in Contrasts

By Leonard Gross

In 1702 a Swiss Brethren writer republished the Dordrecht Confession of Faith, a Dutch Mennonite confession going back to the year 1632. This was not the first time that this Dutch confession had been republished. For example, in 1664, and again in 1691, a new edition of this confession of faith was published in German translation.¹ What was new about the 1702 edition of the Dordrecht Confession, is that it was changed considerably by the Swiss Brethren, basically through additions modifying the original document, both in spirit and in substance.²

Why such interest in a Dutch Mennonite confession among the Swiss in the first place? Why such major modifications of the document on the part of the Swiss Brethren? These two questions and their attempted answer become the focus of this essay. The deeper intention is to show something of the common elements between the Dutch Mennonites and the Swiss Brethren, as well as a few major differences between the two groups, so often unjustifiably thrown into the same pot.

Swiss Brethren Additions to the Dordrecht Confession

By the year 1702 the Dordrecht Confession of 1632 had become well-known among the Swiss Brethren.³ In fact, this Dutch Mennonite confession apparently was accepted, at least in principle, by many Swiss Brethren. However, some Swiss Brethren felt that elements in the substance and spirit of the confession of faith were at



The Dordrecht Confession of Faith was adopted by Flemish and Friesian Mennonite preachers as a basis for union in 1632 at the city of Dordrecht in the Netherlands. Above is the tower of the Dordrecht "Great Church," The Church of Our Lady, the oldest parts of which date back to 1280. Photo: Jan Gleysteen Collection

odds with their own approach to faith.⁴ The awareness of such differences came to a head in 1693 and in the ensuing years when some Swiss apparently began, possibly for the first time, to analyze what the Dordrecht Confession entailed, both in substance and in spirit.⁵ This debate apparently led those Swiss leaders who were responsible for the publication of **Golden Apples** to make bold and rework the 1632 Dutch confession. They transformed it into more of a traditional Swiss Brethren confession.

In any case, the reworking of the document resulted in major changes and additions to the Dordrecht Confession. A nineteenth article on the Holy Spirit was even added (placed as Article Six), along with new, extended paragraphs on the nature of baptism, the church, the Lord's Supper, shunning, and the Second Coming of Christ.

The new article, "On the Holy Spirit," is directly in line with traditional Swiss Brethren views on the Spirit of God.⁶ As a moderate statement, it stands somewhat in contrast to the then more popular Pietistic emphases on the inner life. The Article reads:

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, through which the Father and Son work;

"And that with the Father and Son it is thus conceived as one divine Being, as we can see in the story of the creation, for which reason we acknowledge them to be One in willing, working, reigning and governing, and achieving; this divine Being has revealed itself here in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as the only true God (Jn. 14:16; Ps. 33:6; Gen. 1; Jn. 10:30, 14:11; Mt. 3:16-17; 1 Jn. 5:8)."⁷

The original Dordrecht article on baptism, too, received an additional paragraph, showing the Swiss Brethren concern for tying baptism to the Christian community. The word is to go out, in witness and mission, and those who respond in faith are then to be incorporated into the church (that is, the congregation) through baptism.

Although the original Dutch Mennonite article mentions being "incorporated into the communion of the saints,"⁸ the general Dordrecht idea of "communion of saints" seems less concrete than the Swiss Brethren's idea of "incorporat[ing] a person into Christ's church"⁹ — which for the Swiss was very specifically the congregation (Gemeinde).¹⁰

The added Swiss elements in the next article, centering in the nature of the church, define further the Swiss Brethren views on this theme. The idea of separation grants further insights into differences between the Dutch and Swiss, in their views on the nature of the church, including the nature of the congregation, in and of itself. The church, according to the Swiss, is composed of those who "have separated themselves from the sinful world . . ."¹¹ The themes of discipleship and love, and the essential quality of gathering together, combine in the following powerful statement: "[Having] a fiery brotherly love among one another; and maintaining the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace, and through taking up the cross, and the true discipleship of Christ."¹²

Once again, the original Dordrecht Confession mentions being "incorporated into the communion of the saints here on earth,"¹³ yet the idea of "communion" again seems to be less concrete than the Swiss Brethren emphasis. For the Swiss the nature of

the church is the faithful who gather together to explicate and respond to truth.

The added Swiss paragraphs to the Dordrecht article on the Lord's Supper further document the Swiss Brethren views on the nature of the church, suggesting they did not feel the Dutch Dordrecht article said it well enough. A passage from the Swiss addition affirms the Christian communion that is founded in the peace, love and unity of the Spirit: "The Lord's Supper connects us to peace, love, unity of the Spirit, and true Christian communion among one another (Eph. 4:1), as the Apostle says: The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread' (1 Cor. 10:16-17; [Mt. 26:25; Mk. 14:22; 1 Cor. 11:23-26])."¹⁴

Yet another modification to the question of the nature of the church lay in the area of church discipline. Both the Swiss and the Dutch believed in the necessity of admonition and discipline. The Swiss, however, chose to add to the article on excommunication a greater element of forgiveness to the repentant: "We are again obliged, according to the teachings of the apostles, to receive and accept those who show improvement and demonstrate repentance, whereby we forgive their mistakes and comfort them (2 Cor. 2:6-10)."¹⁵

This whole question of how to relate to those under the ban came to a head among the Swiss Brethren in the 1690s. Some, sided with the stricter approach that those under the ban need to fulfill the original judgment outlining the nature and length of the

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ban and consequent shunning. Others, including the author of the Swiss additions to the Dordrecht Confession, desired to show a redemptive spirit as soon as the person under the ban showed signs of repentance.¹⁶

Concluding Observations

Probably every bit as much of a contrast existed between the Dutch Mennonites and the Swiss Brethren, during the sixteenth century, as there was between the German Lutherans and the Swiss Reformed (Calvinists). For example, Menno Simons, believing that he was speaking for the whole of the Dutch Mennonite group, excommunicated the whole group of Swiss Brethren in the late 1550s, on the basis of differences in doctrine. Neither did the German Lutherans and the Swiss Reformed see eye to eye; each group developed its own set of contrasting doctrines.

On the other hand, there was continuity within the Lutheran tradition, from Luther to Melancthon, also within the Swiss Reformed tradition, from Zwingli to Bullinger and Calvin. Within the Swiss Brethren tradition continuity moved from Grebel, Mantz and Blaurock to Sattler, Schnell and Guth, including the Hutterites (via the efforts of Blaurock and Reublin). One may see within the Dutch Mennonite tradition a certain continuity of thought and practice, beginning with Menno Simons, through several generations of Dutch Anabaptism, including those who affirmed the Dordrecht Confession in 1632. Yet the Dutch Anabaptist movement within Northern Europe seemed to generate greater diversity within its midst than was the case for Swiss Anabaptism.

These contrasts between the Swiss and the Dutch Anabaptists lay at the basis of the felt need of the Swiss Brethren in 1702 to come to terms with the Dordrecht Confession. In this regard, in the *Golden Apples* there is no way of knowing that eighteen of these nineteen articles are in fact the Dordrecht Confession. The reason for this is probably due to the many changes the Swiss Brethren made to bring the Dutch Dordrecht Confession more in line with the Swiss Brethren congregational approach to faith and life.¹⁷

In summary, the Swiss amended



In 1660, six preachers and seven deacons of the Alsatian Swiss Brethren adopted the 1632 Dordrecht Confession of Faith at a meeting in this mill in Ohnenheim in Rappoltstein. "However, some Swiss Brethren felt that elements of the confession of faith were at odds with their own approach to faith." Photo: Jan Gleysteen Collection

the Dordrecht Confession, adding a certain Swiss emphasis and interpretation to the nature of discipleship and the church. The Swiss held that the authority of the church rested and remained within the whole body of gathered disciples, where the process of determining truth in life takes place, with appropriate leadership at hand to facilitate this process.

For Dutch Anabaptism, on the other hand, N. van der Zijpp notes certain antithetical motifs within the Dutch tradition itself, in a passage that is important enough to quote in extenso: "In 1547 Adam Pastor, an elder, was excommunicated on account of deviating views on the Trinity. On this occasion Dirk Philips and Menno Simons assumed the authority to ban, which properly belonged to the brotherhood. This was a basic alteration that became more and more incisive: Is the first authority the individual or the congregation?"

Finally the great conflict in Menno's life came, which had its basis in this question. Here a disparity of views among the Anabaptists became evident, which had actually existed from the very beginning and is still noticeable among the Dutch Mennonites. Whereas some experienced faith as a personal and inner relationship with God, considered baptism as a personal union between their conscience and God, knew nothing of dominant position either of the congregation or of the elders, wanted to make only a lenient use of the ban, and were disinclined to any formulating of the faith because they feared that the word of man might acquire more respect and power than the Word of God (in general the Spiritualist position), others held fast to the concept of the visible church as a church without spot or wrinkle, in which every individual subjected himself to the common brotherhood, recognized and desired

the authority of the elders who would govern the congregation and apply the ban strictly against the unworthy and unbelieving, and demanded a firm system of doctrine expressed in a confession of faith, which to be sure never acquired complete authority as in other churches but was nevertheless of great authority and a means of separating the worthy from the unworthy. The latter party was in the majority."¹⁸


The significance of this spirit of working congregationally (the Swiss Brethren tradition) can hardly be overemphasized, when contrasting this to the authoritarian approach of Menno Simons. This Dutch leader hardly followed mutual address as found in Matthew 18, where the congregation is ultimately responsible for admonition and discipline. Menno banned—on the basis of his own authority as a bishop—individuals, congregations, and indeed, at one point, as already noted, the whole "denomination" of Swiss Brethren. Such was hardly the manner of Michael Sattler in 1527 or the assumed editor of *Golden Apples*, Jakob Guth. He wrote the following concerning mutual address: "Our Old High Germans have been agreed for a hundred years to forbear one another in love, with these articles. The Old Flemish recognized it, provided it was unanimously understood. . . . As far as outward avoidance is concerned, I can submit to unanimous agreement, but I cannot adhere to one who excludes and banishes another, and also do not advise brethren in other countries [probably Switzerland and Alsace] to do so."¹⁹

Here, Guth remained grounded in the Swiss Brethren approach to group process, standing so diametrically opposed to the episcopal approach of Menno Simons. Although he does not mention directly the Rule of Christ (Matthew 18:15-18), the spirit and substance of his posture is in direct keeping with Matthew 18.

It remains that Matthew 18—so central in the Swiss tradition, and so obvious in the Swiss Brethren's Schleithem Confession of 1527—is not mentioned, directly or indirectly, in the Dordrecht Confession of 1632. On the other hand, 1 Corinthians 5—so central to the tradition of Menno Simons and Dirk Philips, and so obvious in the Dutch Mennonite Dordrecht Confession—is not

mentioned, directly or indirectly, in the Schleithem Confession. This very fact is crucial in assessing the differences between the two groups. A particular set of principles on group dynamics penetrated to the very heart of the Swiss Brethren as a whole, contrasting markedly with those elements within Dutch Mennonitism that accepted Menno Simons' approach to church structures and administration.

There is an Anabaptist document, however, that addressed these very questions and attempted consciously to bring Matthew 18 into synthesis with 1 Corinthians 5. This document is the Concept of Cologne of 1591, a creative Anabaptist confession of faith that merits careful attention, with its attempt to maintain the essential group process of the Swiss Brethren (the concern of Jesus in Matthew 18), as well as the purity of the church (at the center of the concern of Paul in 1 Corinthians 5).²⁰

The paradox behind this set of contrasting truths must be resolved, if we want to remain true to the deeper sense of reconciliation that is foundational to biblical truth. Here, we would do well to remember the way of the Anabaptist Hans Denck. In the 1520s, he courageously set down a whole range of paradoxical and seemingly contradictory—or at least, contrasting—statements of Christ, Paul and others, and then attempted resolution on a deeper plane. 

Leonard Gross, consulting archivist of the Mennonite Church, recently completed an English translation of *Guldene Aepffel in silbern Schalen* (*Golden Apples in Silver Bowls*). This article is based on a portion of this forthcoming annotated translation to be published by the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society in its series, *Mennonite Sources and Documents*.

¹ Probably translated by Tieleman Tiele van Sittert, who had come from the Swiss Brethren tradition, yet had become a leading figure within Dutch Mennonitism during the seventeenth century, up to the time of his death in 1664.

² Included in the *Sammelband* (a volume of booklets, bound together), *Guldene Aepffel in silbern Schalen* (*Golden Apples in Silver Bowls*), published in 1702 in Basel, Switzerland. Although the editor is not named, Jakob Guth comes into question as editor of the volume, and if so, is the likely person to

have appended the Swiss Brethren additions throughout the Dordrecht Confession.

³ See John B. Mast (tr. & ed.), *The Letters of the Amish Division of 1693-1711*, where the Dordrecht Confession is mentioned numerous times: pp. 15, 18, 19, 27, 40, and especially 88.

⁴ See Mast, 57-58. For the Swiss Brethren, it all depended upon exactly how the Dordrecht Confession was interpreted, as to whether or not it was in line with Swiss Anabaptist thought and practice. See pp. 15, 18, 19 and 27, which reflect the one view, and pp. 40 and 88, which reflect the Ammann view, in this regard.

⁵ Such seems to be the case, for example, for Jakob Guth. See Mast, pp. 15, 57-60.

⁶ See, e.g., Matthias Servaes's views, in this regard, scattered throughout his writings (as found in *Golden Apples*).

⁷ See *Golden Apples*, ms., 327.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 328.

¹⁰ See, for example, Mast, 59, on the need for consensus, in general; see also, Mast, 104, for an example of Swiss *Gemeindetheologie* at work, where the "entire congregation" is at work, in wrestling with problems, and not only the leadership.

¹¹ *Golden Apples*, 331.

¹² *Ibid.*, 331. In German: "Nachfolgung Christi."

¹³ *Ibid.*, 332.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 337.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 344. This contrasts to the views of Ulrich Ammann, for example, who states, in 1698: ". . . They then say that those who are repentant shall not be avoided even though they are under the ban. We, however, confess a natural and spiritual avoidance without distinction on all who are rightfully expelled. There is of course a great difference in a repentant and unrepentant person, but in avoidance the Scriptures make no distinction . . ." (Mast, 96).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ See my essay, "The First Mennonite Merger: The Concept of Cologne" (*Mennonite Yearbook*, 1990-1991, 8-10), for further points of difference between the Swiss Brethren and the Dutch Mennonites. See also my essay, "Menno Simons' Legacy" (*Mennonite Yearbook*, 1986-87, 8-10), where some of Menno's views on the nature of the church are highlighted (which differ from those of the Swiss Brethren). One must remember, however, that Menno, during most of his active years as an Anabaptist, was not a congregational minister, but a bishop, with oversight over vast stretches of Northern Europe—this in itself setting him, with his episcopal bent, apart from the congregational patterns of the Swiss Brethren.

¹⁸ "Netherlands," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, III, 827. See also the larger context as found in Jakob Guth's two epistles in Mast.

¹⁹ Mast, 58-59.

²⁰ See my short essay, and attached translation of, the *Concept of Cologne*, op. cit.

Two Hundred Years in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania

By John E. Sharp

If it's true that an "Amishman can smell limestone land for one hundred miles,"¹ then it's no accident that westward-moving Amish discovered the fertile valleys of Mifflin County. The limestone soil of these valleys has nurtured a thriving Amish (and eventually Mennonite) community for two centuries.

Kishacoquillas Valley, the larger of two valleys, is commonly called "Big Valley." The thirty-mile long valley is nestled between Jack's and Standing Stone Mountains. The valley and the creek which drains it are named for Chief Kishacoquillas, the leader of a Shawnee village located at the present site of Lewistown.

The Juniata River Valley, named for the Juniata Indians, who lived and hunted there, lies across Jack's Mountain to the southeast. The Amish who began arriving about 1797, found rich soil along both banks of the Juniata River.

The Amish from the eastern Pennsylvania counties and from Somerset County, followed the Scotch Irish, who established a permanent white settlement after Pontiac's War of 1763. With the opening of the Northwest Territories, the Scotch-Irish, always pushing the frontiers, moved further west. The Amish purchased the partially-cleared land, and found it to be productive.

This valley region is the setting for S. Duane Kauffman's **Mifflin County Amish and Mennonite Story, 1791-1991**, published by the Mifflin County Mennonite Historical Society. Kauffman, a native son of the Upper River Settlement of Juniata River Valley, guides the reader through the two centuries of struggle and growth.

Kauffman sets the stage for telling the Mifflin County story by taking a new look at the Reist-Ammann division of the Swiss Brethren in 1693-97. He gives greater credibility to Jacob Ammann than most Mennonite scholars have allowed. By quoting a journal written by Amish immigrant Hans Jacob Kauffman, the author



Jacob Miller (1771-1867) was one of the first to migrate from Berks County to Mifflin County in 1804. Better known as "Bear Jacob," he reputedly killed 99 bears, 80 wolves, and unnumbered deer. Photo: Jonas J. Yoder

describes the extreme dangers of crossing the Atlantic Ocean. In chapter two, Kauffman gives a summary of the early eastern Pennsylvania settlements which supplied Mifflin County's Amish population.

The Amish settlement began in the Kishacoquillas Valley in 1791. Among the earliest settlers were Jacob Yoder (1762-1837), grandson of "Widow Barbara" Yoder; John Yoder (1754-), "Yotter Hannes"; John Hooley (1739-1805), son of immigrant Andreas Holly; John Zook (1748-1804), son of immigrant Moritz Zug; and Rudolph and Christian Detweiler (father and son). Though records are hard to come by, Kauffman has gathered evidence for these early arrivals.²

Kauffman's research uncovered a March 16, 1791, deed showing John Yoder (Yotter Hannes) from Brothers Valley Township, Bedford County (at present, Somerset).³ This document appears to be the earliest deed. Interestingly enough, the deed is witnessed by "Johannes Zuig" (John Zug/Zook), showing that he was also there at that date, perhaps to explore the place for later migration, as Kauffman suggests.⁴

By the end of the first decade, at least fifty families had settled in the Kishacoquillas Valley. These families included such surnames as Alwine, Garver, Hartzler, Kauffman, Lantz, Miller, Peachey, Plank, and Sharp.⁵

Meanwhile, across Jacks Mountain, two more settlements were taking



Mattawana Mennonite Sewing Circle about 1910: (front) Nettie Grassmyer Smith, Nannie King, Mary Yoder, Ruth Kauffman French; (standing) Etta Youtzy Kauffman, Mamie King Hartzler, Alice Miller Renninger, and Alice Harshbarger.
Photo: Jonas J. Yoder

shape along the Juniata River. These communities were the Upper River Congregation which developed into the Mattawana Mennonite Church and the Lower River Settlement which became extinct by 1840.

Kauffman points to a 1797 purchase of land by Jacob Kurtz as the beginning of the Upper River Settlement. A steady stream of immigrants from Berks, Chester, Lancaster and Lebanon counties followed Kurtz, and established a strong Amish community along the Juniata. Among them were Joseph (Yost) Yoder (1757-1833), another grandson of "Widow Barbara" Yoder and the congregation's first minister; John and Michael (1775-1847) Youtzy, brothers-in-law of Joseph Yoder; and Jacob (1754-1835) and Anna (1755-1814) Miller, Jacob being a hunter who earned the nickname, "Bear Jacob."⁶ In 1815, John Kauffman, and his son Christian from Juniata County, bought property next to Preacher Jacob Hartzler.⁷

Five miles down-river another settlement was established with the arrival of the Jacob Miller family in 1798. This community "became a network of intertwining relationships consisting primarily of members of the Lantz and Stutzman families."⁸ Kauffman notes that though this settlement declined and by 1850 died out, "it left an astounding legacy in terms of spiritual leadership in the Amish and Amish Mennonite

Church." He cites eight bishops who served other communities who had lived in this Lower River Settlement.⁹

Three Amish settlements began in Mifflin County of which two survived. By 1840 the Amish of the Lower River Settlement had moved on—many joining new settlements further west. Although many from the Upper River Settlement and the Kishacoquillas Valley also joined the westward movement, these two communities remained rooted in Mifflin County.

Nineteenth Century Splintering

The scenic landscape of Mifflin County's valleys, viewed from the top of Jack's Mountain, simulates the patchwork design of a beautiful quilt. However, this folkart design is not the most distinguishing trademark of the Mifflin County Amish. Like the many sinkholes which mar the fertile fields, numerous schisms have marred the historic landscape.

Theron Schlabach has called the Mifflin County settlement "one of the most thriving (and schismatic) of Pennsylvania's Amish settlements."¹⁰

S. Duane Kauffman laments this infamous reputation. In his preface to the *Mifflin County Amish and Mennonite Story, 1791-1991*, Kauffman writes: "One of the most disappointing elements of the story is the breakdown in human relationships. Unfortunately, the Amish and Amish Mennonites of

Mifflin County Amish and Mennonite Story, 1791-1991. S. Duane Kauffman. Belleville, Pa.: Mifflin County Mennonite Historical Society, 1991. Pp. 472. \$21.85.

Mifflin County have provided excellent case studies for university students and sociologists seeking data on social fragmentation."¹¹

By the close of the nineteenth century, a little more than 100 years after they had arrived, the Mifflin County Amish had splintered into five factions.

The first division, in the late 1840s, centered around the silencing of Bishop Samuel B. King. For reasons that are unclear, the Upper District Congregation of the Kishacoquillas Valley, in consultation with Amish ministers from Pequea in Lancaster County, had Bishop King removed from office. This decision was later affirmed by a meeting of ministers from Holmes County, Ohio; Grantsville, Maryland; and Somerset, Pennsylvania.

Not all were pleased with this disciplinary action. King's father-in-law, "Long Christian" Zook, who was also the leading bishop of the Kishacoquillas Valley, was unwilling to accept the decision. In defiance, Bishop Zook invited his son-in-law, Samuel B. King, into the fellowship of the Lower District, thereby severing relationships with the Upper and Middle districts.

Meanwhile, other issues were stirring in the Upper and Middle districts. The mode of baptism was creating controversy in many Amish communities. Should not baptism be done in a running stream after the manner of Jesus' own baptism in the Jordan? Change-minded Bishop Solomon Beiler of the Middle District and the more-traditional Bishop Abraham Peachey of the Upper District squared off against each other. Beiler became an advocate of the new mode, while Peachey defended the traditional practice of "house baptism."

This conflict was more complicated than it may appear. Baptism was the theological issue, but the form was not immune to the forces of acculturation which were at work. Beiler, the

younger brother of conservative Lancaster County bishop David Beiler, was willing to accommodate some cultural changes. Abraham Peachey wanted to hold the line on accommodation.

Three consultations of ministers from outside the county in the decade of the 1850s failed to settle the issues. Nor did the 1863 churchwide meeting of Amish leaders, the **Diener-Versammlung**, held in the Kishacoquillas Valley effect reconciliation. Soon after this churchwide conference of 1863, Beiler and Peachey broke fellowship.

This schism was simulated in other Amish communities during the era that has been called "The Great

Schism." From this division came the Amish Mennonites and Old Order Amish.¹²

In Mifflin County, Solomon Beiler's change-minded group identified with the Amish Mennonites, and under Abraham Peachey's leadership, the Peachey Church identified with the Old Order Amish.

The major symbol of the Amish Mennonites was the building of meetinghouses. By the end of the decade, Beiler's group had built two meetinghouses in the Kishacoquillas Valley—one at Belleville (1868) and the other near Allensville (1869). The Upper River or Mattawana congregation, across Jack's Mountain, under the able leadership of Bishop

Michael Yoder identified with the Amish Mennonites. They built a meetinghouse in 1871.

Long Christian Zook's Lower District Congregation apparently was not involved in the baptism controversy though they, like the Peachey Church, resisted acculturation. After Bishop Zook's death, and during the tenure of Zook's successor, Bishop Shem Yoder (1801-1884), this congregation experienced its own schism.

Certainly, among the causes of the split was the issue of acculturation. Some wanted to allow for some accommodation and change. Others wished for the symbols and lifestyle of an earlier generation. These dissenters, in 1881, asked Bishop Yost H. Yoder of the Gosper County, Nebraska, settlement for assistance. Yoder ordained a bishop and a minister, who along with the deacon (who was persuaded to join the dissenters), gave leadership to this splinter group. Known as the Old School or the Nebraska Amish, and identified by their white-topped buggies, this group is "the most traditional of all Amish in the New World, (and) they have retained the oldest customs."¹³

The more progressive horse and buggy Amish faction, today known as the Byler Church, can be identified by their yellow-topped buggies. They consider themselves to be the main trunk of the Amish family tree, justifying such a status on the basis of their possessing the original alms fund and record book.

As a result of the accommodations allowed by Solomon Beiler's congregation in the decade of the 1860s, a reactionary conservative movement was formed in the 1890s. Even the change-minded leaders of the sixties became alarmed at the fast pace of change.

Bishop Abraham D. Zook led the reactionary group, and withdrew from the Amish Mennonite congregations in 1898. At the century's end, Zook's congregation, named Locust Grove for the grove of trees which shaded the meetinghouse, built in 1899, remained unaffiliated.

Summary

After 110 years in Mifflin County, the Amish settlement had splintered into five main factions: (1) Amish Mennonite (with meetinghouses at



Joseph W. Yoder (1872-1956) wrote *Rosanna of the Amish and other literature* from his Mifflin County Amish life. Photo: Jonas J. Yoder

Belleville, Allensville, and Mattawana); (2) Unaffiliated (Locust Grove, with a meetinghouse near Belleville); (3) Peachey Old Order Amish; (4) Byler Old Order Amish; and (5) Nebraska Old Order Amish.

It may be helpful to note that by definition, Amish and Mennonites are susceptible to this kind of splintering. Deeply imbedded in the Amish Mennonite soul is the conviction that lifestyle is evidence of a sincere faith. Given this definition of faith, it mattered to the Amish bishops how their members looked, how they dressed, what style of worship was adopted, what language was used, what style and color of buggies were driven. They, like their Anabaptist ancestors, were willing to pay a heavy price for their convictions.

Church divisions did not occupy all their time and energy. Kauffman turns to the lighter side of life in a chapter entitled "The Good Old Days." The chapter is full of anecdotes of farming, flittings, gypsies and hobos, frolics, illness and cures, hunting, fishing and trapping, and extraordinary achievements.

In the chapters that follow, Kauffman reviews the developments in education, literature and music. He notes the contributions of significant persons. He also surveys the second century of life in Mifflin County, including the community's response to the two world wars. The appendix includes an excellent collection of tables and documents, including tax



S. Duane Kauffman

Amish and Mennonites in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, 1992

Group	Membership	Congregations
Amish		
Beachy	238	2
Byler	106	2
Gospel Light	84	1
Nebraska	332	7
Peachey/Renno	344	7
Brethren in Christ	70	1
Mennonite		
Allegheny Conference	943	6
Conservative Conference	470	2
Holdeman Church of God in Christ	150	1
Mid-Atlantic Conference	19	1
Selinsgrove Amish Mennonite	40	1
Unaffiliated	123	1

Statistics by John E. Sharp based on *Mennonite Yearbook*, 1990-91; *The New American Almanac*, 1992; and *Old Order Amish Directory of Mifflin and Juniata Counties*, 1987.

lists, census records, list of ordained ministers, poetry, and a reprint of Shem Zook's 1880 "Eine Wahre Darstellung . . ." which is his account of the church schism of Mifflin County.

Mifflin County's limestone valleys and wooded ridges have held many stories of the Amish and their descendants. S. Duane Kauffman has retold many of these stories in his 472-page history. If the Amish migrating to Mifflin County "could smell limestone for a hundred miles," I wonder, could they also have predicted such a splintering of the fellowship? *U*

John E. Sharp of Scottdale, Pennsylvania, chairs the Historical Committee of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference and is a native of Mifflin County, Pennsylvania.

¹J. W. Yoder, *Rosanna's Boys* (Harrisonburg, Va.: Choice Productions, 1987, originally published in 1948), p. 13.

²S. Duane Kauffman, *Mifflin County Amish and Mennonite Story, 1791-1991*, (Belleville, Pa.: Mifflin County Mennonite Historical Society, 1991), p. 41.

³Kauffman, pp. 54-59.

⁴Kauffman, Appendix, Document 1, p. 404.

⁵Kauffman, p. 57.

⁶Kauffman, Appendix, Table 1, pp. 359-361.

⁷Kauffman, pp. 66, 67.

⁸Kauffman, p. 72.

⁹Kauffman, p. 75.

¹⁰Theron Schlabach, *Peace, Faith, Nation* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1988), p. 23.

¹¹Kauffman p. 3.

¹²Kauffman, p. 128.

¹³John A. Hostetler, *Amish Society*, Third Edition (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press), p. 284.

Mennonite and Related Church Historians and Committees

This directory attempts to list North American Mennonite, Amish and related historical committees, societies, and conference historians. **Mennonite Historical Bulletin** plans to publish this list annually and would appreciate any updates or corrections from our readers.

Allegheny Conference Historical Committee, John E. Sharp, Mennonite Church of Scottdale, Scottdale, PA 15683 412 887 7470

Amish Heritage Committee, Dan Beachy, 407 South Greene Road, Goshen, IN 46526 219 534 6530

Atlantic Coast Conference Historians, J. Lemar and Lois Ann Mast, Box 171, Elverson, PA 19520 215 286 0258

Brethren in Christ Church, E. Morris Sider, Archives of Brethren in Christ Church, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027 717 691 6048

British Columbia, Conference of Mennonites, Christopher Arney, Box 2204, Clearbrook, BC V2T 3X8 604 850 6658

California Mennonite Historical Society, Peter J. Klassen, 4824 East Butler, Fresno CA 93727 209 453 2225

Canada, Mennonite Historical Society, Ted E. Friesen, Box 720, Altona, MB R0G 0B0 204 324 6401

Casselman River Area Amish and Mennonite Historians, David I. Miller, Box 591, Grantsville, MD 21536

Central District Conference, General Conference, Richard MacMaster, 256 Grove Street, Bluffton, OH 45817 419 358 8230

Conference of Mennonites in Canada History and Archives Committee, Lawrence Klippenstein, Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftsbury Blvd., Winnipeg, R3P 0M4 204 888 6781

Conservative Mennonite Conference Historical Committee, Elmer S. Yoder, 3511 Edison Street, Hartsville OH 44632 216 877 9566

Cumberland Valley, Mennonite Historical Center, Roy M. Showalter, Box 335, State Line, PA 17263 301 733 7986

Essex-Kent Mennonite Historical Association, 31 Pickwick Drive, Leamington, ON N8H 4T5

General Conference Mennonite Church Historical Committee, David Haury, 3132 SW Belle, Topeka, KS 66614 913 296 3251

Heritage Historical Library, David Luthy, Route 4, Aylmer, ON Canada N5H 2R3

Illinois Conference Historian, Carolyn Nafziger, 31740 Lagoon Road, Minier, IL 61759 309 392 2518

Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society, Edwin J. Stalter, Box 819, Metamora, IL 61548 309 266 6974

Indiana Michigan Conference Historian, Russell Krabill, 26221 Vista Lane, Elkhart, IN 46517 219 522 6869

Juniata Mennonite Historical Society, Noah L. Zimmerman, The Historical Center, HCR 63, Richfield, PA 17086 717 694 3543

Kidron Community Historical Society, Wayne Liechty, Box 14, Kidron, OH 44636 216 857 3375

Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, Carolyn Charles Wenger, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602 717 393 9745

Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, Lawrence Klippenstein, 484 Berkley Street, Winnipeg, MB R3R 1J9 204 888 6718

Mennonite Archives of Ontario, Sam Steiner, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6 519 885 0220 ext. 238

Mennonite Brethren Churches (Canada) Historical Committee, Abe Dueck, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 169 Riverton Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5 204 669 6575

Mennonite Brethren Conference (North American) Historical Commission, Paul Toews, Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 4824 East Butler, Fresno, CA 93727 209 453 2225

Mennonite Brethren Church (USA), William Johnson, Center for MB Studies, Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS 67063

Mennonite Church Historical Association, Levi Miller, Historical Committee and Archives of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526 219 535 7477

Mennonite Historical Library, Ann Hilty, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817 419 358 8015 ext. 365

Mennonite Historical Library, John D. Roth, Goshen College, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526 219 535 7418

Mennonite Historical Society, Theron F. Schlabach, Goshen College, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526 219 535 7435

Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta, Henry D. Goerzen, 76 Skyline Cres NE, Calgary AB T1Y 4V9 403 275 6935

Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania, Carolyn S. Nolan, The MeetingHouse, 565 Yoder Road, Box 82, Harleysville, PA 19438 215 256 3020

Mennonite Historical Society of Iowa, Lois Gugel, 710 12th Street, Kalona, IA 52247 319 656 3732

Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, Lorna Bergey, 1414 King Street East, Apt. 1202, Kitchener, Ont. N2G 4T8 519 741 9951

Mennonite Library and Archives, John D. Thiesen, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117 316 283 2500 ext. 304

Mifflin County Mennonite Historical Society, Trennis King, Route 1, Box 26, Belleville, PA 17004 717 935 2786

Muddy Creek Farm Library, Amos B. and Nora B. Hoover, 376 N. Muddy Creek Road, Denver, PA 17517 215 848 4849

Nebraska Mennonite Historical Society, Peg Burkey, Route 1, Dorchester, NE 68343

North Central Mennonite Conference Historian, Melvin Hochstetler, Route 1, Box 116, Wolford, ND 58385 701 583 2562

Northern District Conference, Rachel Senner, Freeman Academy, 748 South Main, Freeman, SD 57209 605 925 4237

Northwest Conference Historian, Harry Stauffer, Route 1, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0 403 662 2144

Ohio Amish Library, Paul Kline, 4292 Star Route 39, Millersburg, OH 44654 216 893 2883

Ohio Conference Historical Committee, Wilmer Swope, 785 Beeson Mill Road, Leetonia, OH 44431

Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society, Hope K. Lind, 28773, Gimpl Hill Road, Eugene, OR 97402 503 344 5974

Pequea Bruderschaft Library, located on Old Leacock Road, one forth mile south of Gordonville, mailing address: 176 North Hollander Road, Gordonville, PA 17529

Saskatchewan Mennonite Historical Society, Dick H. Epp, 2326 Cairns Avenue, Saskatoon, Sask. Canada S7J 1V1

South Central Conference Historian, Bernice L. Hostetler, Route 2, Box 77, Harper, KS 67058 316 896 2040

Southwest Mennonite Conference Historian, David E. Yoder, 4730 W. Northern Avenue, # 2081, Glendale, AZ 85301 602 939 6203

Virginia Conference Historical Committee, James O. Lehman, Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA 22801 703 432 4170

Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Groups, Donald B. Kraybill, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA 17022 717 367 1151

Western District Conference, Rachel Waltner Goossen, Box 97, Goessel, KS 67053 316 367 2464

The Christ of the Spanish Crown and Columbus

By José Ortiz

I want to talk about the Christ who was brought to us by the Spanish Crown, King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile. It is very significant that when this adventure begins we understand the religious background of the medieval Spaniard, especially the Queen.

Queen Isabella was born in 1451 and by the time of her death in 1504, two elements of her life stood out: her difficult family life and her religious fervor.

At the time of the American adventure, Isabella and Ferdinand's family was going through very difficult and tempestuous experiences. Their only son died with no children. The oldest daughter got married and within two years she died while in childbirth.

Another daughter, Juana la Loca, took her husband's embalmed body for a five-year tour around Spain. After that she went to a convent and spent the rest of her life taking care of the dead body.

The last daughter married in England with King Henry the Eighth. Henry left her, but the Church in Rome would not recognize the separation. Well, he said, I am a king and I am sovereign! I can divorce my wife. So he broke with the Catholic Church, and began the Anglican Church. It was a family of tragedy.

Queen Isabella was also known as the Catholic Queen. She was, we might say, a religiously-intoxicated person; for her, religion was very, very serious.

I suspect that because of her personal difficulties, the Queen may have invested her energies into the religious and national agenda of Spain. She became something of a Spanish Pope. She wanted to keep Spanish Catholic priests for Spanish Catholic churches, and when she opposed the nominations of the Pope in Italy she would generally get her way.

The Queen would go to the convents dressed like a nun and tried to get into the business of the secluded life. Seeing that the church buildings were in such a poor conditions, she

made a major investment in the convents. Seeing that Catholic schools and universities were underdeveloped, she supported them to produce more books, even the Bible. She had her hands in everything.

In 1492 she was so desperate in her religious fanaticism that she chased the Moors out of Spain. She also did this to the Jews whom they called Marranos or pigs.

After the Queen had invested herself in solving the problem of the Moors and the Jews, now she and the Spanish church were ready for another task. Along comes Columbus, a very lucky person. He put himself right on the treadmill of history and took advantage of it. When Columbus came with the idea of going to new places and discovering new trade routes, Isabella was very open to the idea. Why not missionary activity also?

Cristobal means the one who bears Christ, the one who carries Christ across the seas. It comes out of a history of San Cristobal, who in the Catholic tradition is the one who helps people to cross the river on his shoulders. Columbus said, in effect, I am the new Saint Christopher who carries Christ across the oceans.

Columbus used the Bible for the purpose of supporting his plans. Quoting from the book of Isaiah (49:5-6), Columbus called himself the Servant of the Lord, to be the Light to the Nations, even to the ends of the earth. From the Book of the Psalms, Columbus was to be the proclaimer of the mighty God. From the book of Isaiah (60:9-10) he read:


Surely the islands look to me;
in the lead are the ships of Tarshish,
bringing your sons from afar,
with their silver and gold,
to the honor of the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
for he has endowed you with
splendor.

Foreigners will rebuild your walls,
and their kings will serve you.
Though in anger I struck you,
in favor I will show you
compassion.

Columbus felt a sense of mission. He thought of himself as chosen of God, and, we might say, believed his was a manifest destiny by the grace of God. Here is a queen enthusiastic to evangelize and a Columbus ready to go at her call. What a special combination! Columbus was lucky even in death. He died on Ascension Sunday, so he did not die in an ordinary way like most people; he was a special person.

But for what purpose would Columbus discover new lands and trade routes and get into the spice business? He would do this to make money—plenty of money—so the Spanish Crown could hire enough soldiers to go to the Holy Lands and recapture the Holy Sepulcher from the Moors. The Lord would return to the New Jerusalem, and Columbus wanted that place to be ready, not in the hands of the heathen.

This was Columbus' purpose: this Gospel shall be preached to the ends of the world. The sooner Columbus would take the Gospel, the sooner the Lord will come. Columbus did what we still do in using the Bible for our agenda. In the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, some Christians also use the Scriptures at will.

We want to have some respect for Columbus and the Spanish Crown, but we must acknowledge that it was a partial view of Christianity. Much of their Christian faith was more self-revelation than full revelation. The Christianity that came to America from Spain had Christopher Columbus and Queen Isabella's finger prints on it. They brought an image of Christ to America, but sometimes I wonder if the humble Jesus of the Gospels was moving in another direction. 

José Ortiz, a Mennonite church leader and educator of Goshen, Indiana, is working on a book-length manuscript on 1492 and the Christian faith. The above article is an excerpt from his address "Christ in the Americas: 500 Years Later" presented at Corpus Christi, Texas, October 19, 1991.



1492-1992: Cristobal Colón and the Mennonites

On October 19-20, 1991, the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church sponsored a symposium, "Cristobal Colón and the Mennonites," at the Prince of Peace Iglesia Menonita in Corpus Christi, Texas. In the photo, Hope Kauffman Lind, president of the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society, presented Lawrence Hart, Cheyenne Indian chief and Mennonite minister, an ear of corn in a ceremony of confession. Mennonite historians of European descent presented symbolic gifts to Hart in recognition of the favorable exchange received from the Native American peoples and confession of violence committed against them.

The purpose of the October meeting was to explore the Christian and Mennonite meanings of the 1492-1992 commemoration from the standpoint of the Native Americans who lived here before 1492 and the European immigrants.

Speakers included Lawrence Hart of the Cheyenne Cultural Center in Clinton, Oklahoma; Levi Miller, director of the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church; José Ortiz, director of Hispanic Ministries at Goshen College; and José Matamoros, pastor of the Prince of Peace Iglesia Menonita.

Hart's address, "1492 and the Native Americans," will appear in *Mennonite Yearbook*, 1992, (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1992) and Miller's address, "1492 and the European Mennonite Immigrants," will appear in *Mennonite Life*, March, 1992. Excerpts from the symposium appear on this page. *L*

José Matamoros' Prayer

José Matamoros grew up in Costa Rica where he became a Christian and was called as a minister in the Mennonite Church. His father's family heritage has roots in 1492 and Grenada in Spain, his surname meaning a warrior, literally, "to kill the Muslims." He is a graduate of the Goshen College Hispanic Ministries program and of Rosedale Bible Institute in Ohio. What follows is his prayer following his Sunday morning presentation, "1492 and the Gospel."

"Lord, we see in your Word that your Gospel message is important for a world which is broken and separated. We need your

reconciliation. We confess our acts of the past and our attitudes of the present. We confess our broken relationships, our mistakes. We admit to our sisters and brothers, the Indians, the Native Americans, our failure to speak out against wrongs committed against them and our wrong attitudes.

"Forgive us, Lord. We have failed to celebrate right. We acknowledge that you came to give us unity, peace, love, and reconciliation. What has been called the discovery of America means for us to discover our true identity as your children. We want to discover our neighbors. Let us continue with your help and power to share this gospel of peace and reconciliation in Jesus Christ. Amen."

Recent Publications

Bowman, Deanna Holcomb. **Conrad and Other Fairfield County, Ohio, Families.** 1989. Pp. 55. Order from author, 14810 Herring Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80908.

Christner, H. Walter. **Our Immigrants: Christian and Elizabeth Christner's Family.** 1991. Pp. 254. \$30.00. Order from author, 2912 E. Forest Lake Dr., Sarasota, FL 34232.

Dickson, Donna. **Miller Family Tree: Descendents of Cornelius Elijah Miller and Mary Elizabeth Kauffman.** 1980. Pp. 41. \$8.00. Order from author, 3955 Carl St. NW, Uniontown, OH 44685

George, Warren Harold. **The Descendants of Mary Elizabeth Hochstetler and Andrew Steigleder.** 1990. Pp. 195. Order from author, R 2, Box 1, Benceton, MO 65237.

Hartzler, H. Harold. **Amishman Travels Around the World, The Life of Jonathan B. Fisher.** Elverson, Pa.: Mennonite Family History, 1991. Pp. 33. \$4.50.

Hertzler, Emanuel Cassel. **The Other Hertzlers.** 1991. Pp. 89.

Kipfer, Alfred and Lorraine Roth. **John Steckly Family History...** 1990. Pp. 55. \$10.00. Order from Alfred Kipfer, R 1, Brunner, Ont. K0K 1C0

Miller, Perry D. **Descendents of Benedict C. Miller and Lizzie E. Hershberger.** 1990. Pp. 362. \$14.00. Order from author, 4922 W. 1100 N, Ligonier, IN 46767.

Roth, Lorraine. **The Family History and Genealogy of Christian Stienman(n) and Veronica Eyer.** 1990. Pp. 433. \$27.00. Order from Lorraine Roth, 411-65 Westmount Rd. N., Waterloo, Ont. N2L 5G6.

Wiens, David. **The Wiens Family Chronicle.** 1991. Pp. 296. \$30.00. Order from author, 644 Glenhurst Cres., Gloucester, Ont. K1J 7B7.

Further information on the above books may be obtained from Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526. *L*

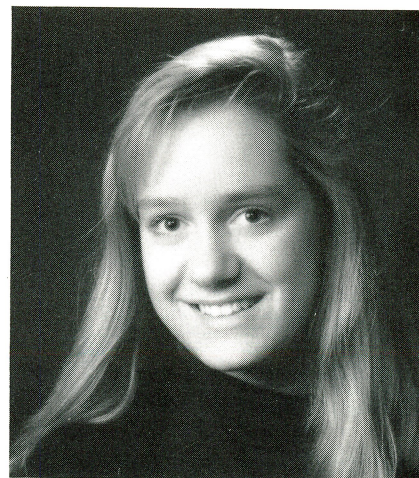
John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest 1991



Linda Huebert Hecht.
Photo: Chris Hughes



Jalane D. Schmidt



Sarah H. Gerber

Class I - Seminary and Graduate School

First Place: Linda Huebert Hecht, Conrad Grebel College, "An Extraordinary Lay Leader: The Life and Work of Helene of Freyberg, Sixteenth Century Noblewoman and Anabaptist from the Tirol."*

Second Place: Franklin L. Yoder, University of Chicago, "Staying in the Church: Mennonites and Revivalism, 1890-1920."

Honorable Mention: Benjamin Wall Redekop, The University of British Columbia, "The German Identity of Mennonite Brethren Immigrants in Canada, 1930-1960"; Rachel Waltner Goossen, The University of Kansas, "Piety and Professionalism: The Bethel Sisters in Newton, Kansas, 1900-1945."

Class II - Third and Fourth Year College and University

First Place: Jalane D. Schmidt, Bethel College, "Toward an Anabaptist Theology of Aesthetics: The Restoration of Grace."

Second Place: Cristina Graber, Washington University in St. Louis, "Evangelism and Social Justice: Mennonite Missions in China from 1914-1951."

Honorable Mention: Corey D. Ross, Eastern Mennonite College, "The Warwick Mennonites and the Military: Their Interaction and its Effects"; Janet

Martin Bauman, Conrad Grebel College, "Sixteenth Century Eschatology: Degrees of Apocalypticism"; Marilyn Kennel, Elizabethtown College, "Strands of Suffering: A Search for the Relevance of the Theology of Suffering in the Twentieth Century."

Class III - First and Second Year College and University

First Place: Vernon H. Peters, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, "Family History: Johann Peters (1840-1909) to Henry Peters (1918-)."

Second Place: Valerie Wiebe, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, "History of the Concordia Hospital."

Class IV - High School

First Place: Sarah H. Gerber, Burlington (Vermont) High School, "Mennonites in the Civil War."

Total Contest Entries: 24


Awards: First, \$75, second, \$25, and one year subscription to Mennonite Quarterly Review; all entrants, one year subscription to **Mennonite Historical Bulletin**

Judges: Leonard Gross, S. Duane Kauffman, H. Wayne Pipkin

Contest Manager: Levi Miller

Sponsor: Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, Indiana 46526

Deadline for Entries of 1992 Contest: June 15, 1992

*Essay to be published in the April 1992 issue of **Mennonite Quarterly Review**. 

Book Reviews

Faith to Creed, Ecumenical perspectives on the Affirmation of the Apostolic Faith in the Fourth Century. Edited by S. Mark Heim. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991. Pp. 206. \$13.95.

The Faith to Creed Consultation on Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches of Christ USA, October 25-27, 1989, was held to bring primarily North American insights on the Nicene Creed and its era (325-381). Responding to the Apostolic Faith study of the World Council of Churches, 13 papers were read and 28 persons participated, including Mennonites Tom Finger, A. James Reimer and J. Denny Weaver.

The papers are of high quality academically and in their awareness of contemporary church agenda. The summary statement indicates that vigorous discussion took place. This

volume is an important book about the fourth century church, particularly for Mennoites in their current discussions about Christology, specifically on the process shaping the doctrine of the Trinity.

All Christians need to come to terms with the Nicene Creed for a fuller understanding of the nature of Christ and of God, and of the Holy Spirit (Chalcedon 451). The four "Ecumenical Councils" 325-451 shaped the basic doctrines of most of the churches of Christendom, particularly those of infant-baptism and liturgical traditions. For these churches the Nicene Creed is normative for doctrine, as are the writings of fourth century "fathers" like the three Cappadocians.

Radical Reformation groups like the Mennonites have, in recent years, increasingly detoured around this period, or at least raised questions about it. E. Glenn Hinson, a Baptist, writes in his paper: "I am not at all sure Baptists will or should ever feel comfortable with the fourth century, particularly with the creed," (p. 127). A number of Mennonite writers of the 1980s see the fourth century as the time of the fall of the church because Emperor Constantine, of dubious Christian conviction, convened the Nicene Council and basically determined its outcome. Thus the creed is more socio-political than biblical, is phrased in Greek philosophical categories (a creed by bishops for bishops), and separates the person of Christ from his work. The creed has no references to ethics or discipleship. Where is the Good News (gospel) in this Greek orthodoxy?

In his creative paper, A. James Reimer of Conrad Grebel College proposes to unhook the creed from Constantine by lowering our estimate of Constantine's involvement with the creed (actually he secretly favored the "heretic" Arius). Reimer holds that the Nicene creedal language is "in fundamental continuity with the Scriptures," (p. 150). Affirming that the Scriptures do teach God in three persons even though the word "Trinity" is not used, and that the creed does unfortunately omit the ethical imperatives of Jesus, Reimer nevertheless proposes that the Hebraic-historical and Greek-ontological thought forms do not contradict but supplement each other.

The Nicene Creed (and others of the

fourth century) were a necessary development, in part, because "you cannot interpret the Bible simply in biblical terms," (p. 153). Beyond this, he believes that trinitarian orthodoxy is necessary as a framework for ethics, including discipleship.

Actually Mennonites have done quite well in their writings about ethics without leaning on Nicea, but Reimer's is a fresh voice that needs further hearing. A path between uncritical acceptance of the creed as in much establishment orthodoxy and an ahistorical rejection of the creeds and the crucial fourth century may be found. This path may not only provide a new approach to Mennonite discussions of Christology, but also be significant for honest dialog between them and the so-called "Main-Line" churches.

Cornelius J. Dyck, Elkhart, Indiana

The Novel. James A. Michener. New York: Random House, 1991. Pp. 446. \$23.00.

James Michener's books are summer reading at the beach and on vacations—lengthy novels that none can read and rest in, undemanding pieces about place and ideas more than character. Ostensibly *The Novel*, with its fraktur bookplates, should be of interest to Mennonites because it is set in the lap of Mennonite country in southeastern Pennsylvania.

I was asked to critique it probably because of its setting and the fact that the novelist in the story has written a series of novels with Mennonites and Amish as his characters. But whether this book accurately portrays Mennonites and Amish is a moot point. Nothing new is added to what we eastern Pennsylvania Anabaptists already know about ourselves—our stolid German ways, our loyalty to the land, our mission to feed the soul through the stomach.

Only a person with nothing else to do would argue over the way Michener slurs the distinctions between Mennonite and Amish. It is a homey, sentimental portrait, and as well for Michener fans, in Lucas Yoder, an intriguing self-portrait of the artist.

The landscape Michener actually engages is the fascinating rolling hills and valleys of the publishing world. *The Novel* is a story about how books get written and marketed, about old

and young, new and established writers, about writers' families and friends, about the storytelling craft, the critic's work, and an argument over what makes great literature. Michener is in dialogue with himself—his success, and perceived failure—an honest stately stare at the mirror of his career. Structurally, the story is divided into books from the points of view of writer, editor, critic and reader. Except for the last, Michener successfully manages all of these.

The Novel ends where it could have begun, I think. I wonder if it presages another novel—this one more about us. It would be a murder by a Mennonite and "how a chain of wrong choices and obstinate behavior can lead to murder." That's the book I want to read.

Joyce Munro, Harleysville, Pennsylvania

Prevailing Over Time: Ethnic Adjustment on the Kansas Prairies, 1875-1925. D. Aidan McQuillan. Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1990. Pp. 292. \$37.50.

With frequent use of charts and graphs, McQuillan has done a careful analysis of the way in which three immigrant groups adjusted to life on the Kansas prairies during the first 50 years of their settlement there. Of the French Canadians, Swedes and Mennonites, McQuillan notes that the Mennonites were the most successful in developing a territorial base. They also assimilated at a slower rate due to their traditional isolationism based on ethnic-religious solidarity.

McQuillan takes issue with the Turnerian frontier thesis which suggests that American-born farmers led the way in developing new farming strategies, ecologically suited to various geographic areas of the United States. The new immigrants learned from the previous experience of the native born. French Canadians and Swedes who settled in central Kansas essentially fit the Turner model. The Mennonites did not. McQuillan attributes this difference to a background of agricultural entrepreneurship in Russia. The ethnic-religious exclusivity of Mennonites caused them to be only marginally influenced by their American-born neighbors.

Therefore, "American farmers who lived adjacent to them [the


Mennonites]... appeared to have developed a more successful and similar system of farming than those who lived adjacent to the Swedes or French Canadians." This is a very interesting and significant study.

Rod A. Janzen, Fresno, California

A Craftsman's Handbook: Henry Lapp. Intro. Beatrice Garvin. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1991. \$15.95.

Henry Lapp (1862-1904) was an Amish cabinet-maker and paint dealer of near Bird-in-Hand, Pennsylvania. In 1956 his six by nine order book—full of pencil and watercolor illustrations of items that he manufactured—was discovered at auction. It was then printed in facsimile by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, in whose collection it now resides. Lapp, who was deaf from birth and partially mute, may have relied heavily upon the order book to describe his wares to potential clients.

The 46 pages are filled with large and small colored drawings of blanket chests, beds, cupboards, clotheslines, bread toasters, mousetraps—what have you—all clearly but naively rendered in shades of red, yellow, green and brown. The book is a valuable resource for documenting Amish material culture and identifying Lapp woodenware that still survives. Equally important, it is also a fine piece of folk art that adds dignity and grace to the lives and culture that lie behind it.

Ervin Beck, Goshen, Indiana 

News and Notes

"In a Mennonite Voice: Women Doing Theology" is the theme of a conference at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario, April 30- May 2. Lois Barrett of Wichita, Kansas, will present an address, "Women's History—Women's Theology: Theological and Methodological Issues in the Writing of the History of Anabaptist and Mennonite Women."

Calvary Christian Fellowship Church of Los Angeles, California, celebrated its 75th anniversary in November of 1991. **Douglas D.H. Kaufman** wrote the congregation's story of becoming increasingly multi-cultural in *Gospel Herald*, January 7, 1992, "We've come this far by faith."

The current pastor is **James Isaacs**, and the principal of Calvary Christian School is **Brenda Isaacs**.

The Church Historian as Interpreter is the theme of a conference planned for May 21-23, 1992, at Goshen College in Indiana. The conference is sponsored by the historical committees of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. For further information contact David Hauray (3132 SW Belle Ave., Topeka, KS 66614 913 296 3251) or Levi Miller (1700 S. Main, Goshen, IN 46526 219 535 7477).

Este M. Yoder, age 100, died December 1, 1991. She grew up in Springs, Pennsylvania, was a proof reader at Scottsdale's Mennonite Publishing House, and tended an outstanding garden. She was the wife of Edward M. Yoder, an editor of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* from its beginnings in 1940 until his death in 1945. The 1931-1945 journal of Yoder, *Edward, pilgrimage of a mind*, edited by Ida Yoder, is available from the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 S. Main, Goshen, IN 46526.

Clarification. In the *Bulletin*, "Confessions of a Lapsed Radical," by Sam Steiner, October, 1991, p. 7, the statement appears: "On three occasions I was suspended from Goshen College—the last one indefinitely." Steiner's official college transcripts indicate the last suspension had a termination date.

Violence and Nonviolence in the American Experience is the theme of a conference April 10-12, 1992, at Bethel College. Keynote speaker is John H. Yoder of the University of Notre Dame. For information, contact James Juhnke, Kansas Peace Institute, Bethel College, 300 E., 27th Street, North Newton, KS 67117 316 284 5355.

John L. Ruth, filmmaker and historian of Harleysville, Pennsylvania, will give the keynote address at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society's fourteenth annual genealogy conference, March 28, 1992. The conference offers over 20 workshops, and registration information can be secured from Carolyn C. Wenger, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602 717 733 2311.

Martin A. Franke is the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society's storyteller this year in over 20 schools. He will focus on Mennonite

and Native American relationships via folk tales as well as primary sources. Franke is director of the 1719 Hans Herr House.


Julia Kasdorf of Brooklyn, New York, won the 1991 Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize with an entry entitled *Sleeping Preacher*. This winning volume of poetry selected from 914 entries explores the speaker's youth in a western Pennsylvania Mennonite community and life in New York City. University of Pittsburgh Press which sponsors the annual contest will publish the poems this fall.

World War II era personal letters and diaries are being solicited by the Archives of the Mennonite Church (1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526). An effort is being made to gather personal letters of Civilian Public Service men and women, as well as letters of persons from Mennonite families who served in the armed forces.

W. Richard Hassan of Goshen, Indiana, has compiled a thematic finding aid: "Archival Sources on Mennonites in Illinois as Found at the Archives of the Mennonite Church." This guide with 557 entries will appear in *Illinois Mennonite Heritage*, a journal he edited from 1974 to 1989.

Anne M. Yoder of West Liberty, Ohio, is preparing a reference guide of diaries and journals of American Mennonite women, written between 1860 and 1960. The purpose of the study is to develop a reference guide with description and annotations about each diary and journal. These sources, she notes, have been virtually overlooked by historians.


On November 21-23, 1991, the **Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church**, Albert N. Keim, chair, had an in-depth review at the meetings of the General Board of the Mennonite Church. The Board affirmed "efforts on making history meaningful to lay people and congregations" and encouraged the Archives of the Mennonite Church to explore developing a computer data base accessible to all regional historical centers. The Historical Committee is accountable to the Mennonite Church for its work.

Delbert L. Gratz, librarian emeritus of Bluffton College (8990 Augsburg Rd., Bluffton, OH 45817), will direct a Swiss Mennonite Heritage Tour June 9-30, 1992. Gratz has led this tour annually since 1973. 



Goshen College History, 1894-1994

Susan Fisher Miller of Evanston, Illinois, has been commissioned to write the history of Goshen College for its centennial celebration in 1994. A 1980 graduate of Goshen College, Fisher Miller's grandfather, John J. Fisher, Sr., was on the faculty from 1916 to 1923. The Indiana college has its roots in Elkhart Institute where these students were called the "Busy Five" in 1900. Back row: Lizzie Richert (Mrs. Ira Johns) and Hettie Kulp (Mrs. Jacob Mininger). Front row: Marietta Metzler (Mrs. Joseph Lehman); Katie Leighton (Mrs. Ruch) and Olivia Good (Mrs. Samuel Hondrich).

Photo: Hettie (Kulp) Mininger Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church 

Archives of the Mennonite Church

By Dennis Stoesz

What follows is a sampling of acquisitions that have come into the Archives. I have tried to list representative materials as well as choose from both personal collections and organizational records. They are listed in alphabetical order.

Community Mennonite Church (1961-), South Bend, Indiana. Church bulletins, 1987-1989, from this integrated congregation of sixteen members which belongs to both the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference and the Afro-American Mennonite Association. 1 inch. Received July 1989. Donor: Pastor Daniel H. Stoltzfus.

Glanzer, Isabel (Gingrich), Harrisonburg, Virginia. Papers, 1951-1962, which include photographs, slides, books and notes of when Gingrich, then single and from Wellesley, Ontario, served as Matron of the PAX boys at Enkenbach,

Germany, from 1956-59. 4.5 inches. Received August 1989. Donor: Paul J. Glanzer, husband.

Goshen College, Division of Nursing (1950-), Goshen, Indiana. Records, 1966-1987, which include minutes of curriculum, staff, coordinating, business and uniform committee meetings. Also includes a "Study of Graduates, 1953-1966," by Anna Frances Wenger, and Self-Study reports of 1975, 1979 and 1987. 14 inches. Received June and September 1989 and February 1990. Donor: Dawn Haarer, Administrative Assistant.

Graber, Mina (Roth), (1895-1968), Goshen, Indiana. Diaries, 1946-1968, which include daily entries for 22 years, from age 50 to age 73. 9 inches. Received July 1989. Donor: Gladys Graber Beyler, daughter of C. L. and Mina Graber.

Gross, Leonard, Tape Collection, Goshen, Indiana. Sound recording,

1989, interview with Maude Egli Swartzendruber on her life and service with the Mennonite Church. 1 cassette tape. Received July 1989. Donor: Leonard Gross.

Hoover Family Reunion Book, 1903-1938, Elkhart County, Indiana. The record book lists the people who attended the reunions and includes some minutes of meetings as well. 1 inch. Received August 1989. Donor: Helene A. Hoover, Elkhart, Indiana.

Kauffman, Milo F. (1898-1988), Hesston, Kansas. Papers, 1922-1987, which include articles, school notebooks and degrees, essays, articles, books, correspondence, sermons, photographs and artifacts. They focus on his education in the 1920s and early 1930s at Northern Baptist Seminary and McCormick Theological Seminary, his notes and sermons on various topics, his stewardship books written from the 1950s-70s, his correspondence

with various Kansas persons and organizations, photographs from his trip to India, 1962-63, and his wedding coat of 1931. Kauffman was president of Hesston College from 1932-51 and thereafter served as writer, evangelist, lecturer, overseer and interim pastor in Kansas and Illinois. 61 inches. Received July 1989. Donor: Clara (Fricke) Kauffman, wife.

Mennonite Steering Committee on Corrections (1975-1989), Indiana. Records, which include minutes, reports, newsletters and financial statements which reflect this committee's ministry to prison inmates and their families, particularly at Indiana State Prison at Michigan City. This inter-Mennonite committee tied to Indiana-Michigan and Central District Mennonite conferences and Griner and Woodlawn congregations. 20 inches. Received February 1990. Donors: David Bixler, Treasurer, and Wilbur Hostetler, Newsletter Editor, both of Goshen, Indiana.


Mininger, Hettie (Kulp), (1874-1965), Elkhart, Indiana. Seven photographs, 1900-1960s, which

include two 1900 photographs from Elkhart Institute, one of J. D. and Hettie, and four of Hettie at various stages of life. Includes biography of Hettie Mininger, as written by Russell Krabill, 19 pages. 0.5 inches. Received January 1990. Donor: Loaned for copying by Russell Krabill.

North Park Mennonite Church, (1969-1989), Grand Rapids, Michigan. Records, 1973-1989, which include minutes of congregational, council, worship, peace and sewing committee meetings, as well as an Anniversary Book (1979) and Guest Book (1987-89). 22 inches. Received September 1989. Donor: Russell Krabill, Conference Historian, Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference.

Precision Audio (1968-), Bristol, Indiana. Sound recordings, 1986-1989, of various Mennonite conferences and organizations such as the MEDA, Festival of Worship, Ohio Mennonite Conference, Believer's Church Renewal Conference and Conversations on Faith III. Recordings were done on behalf of the conferences and organizations. 165 cassettes.

Received June and July, 1989. Donor: Carolyn Swartzendruber, Precision Audio.

Swartzendruber, Maude (Egli), (1903-1990), Hesston, Kansas. Papers, 1938-1988, which include articles she wrote on nursing education and service as well as some correspondence. Born in Hopedale, Illinois, Swartzendruber was director of La Junta Mennonite School of Nursing from 1943-56, and spent the last twenty years at Hesston, Kansas. She wrote a history book on La Junta, Lamp in the West (1975). 2 inches. Received July 1989. Donor: Maude Swartzendruber. 

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A Century of Deaconesses in the Virginia Conference

By Ruth Krady Lehman



Susanna Hartman Brunk (1843-1913): "One of the most influential deaconesses, a faithful member whose ability and integrity was unquestioned, served as deaconess from 1882-1913." **Photo: Eastern Mennonite College**

From the early 1860s until 1962, deaconesses were ordained in the Middle District of the Virginia Mennonite Conference. No one is sure where Bishop Samuel Coffman (1822-1894) got the idea to call women to help in the tasks of the church. Obviously, he did not follow the lead of the Pennsylvania Mennonite conferences, which preceded the Virginia Conference, for they had no deaconesses. Nor did he get the idea from the western Mennonite deaconess orders; they were set up for a different purpose. He may have borrowed the idea from neighboring denominations, who frequently shared meeting places with the Mennonites in Virginia prior to the Civil War.

Samuel Coffman, ordained bishop in 1861, was an innovative leader in the Virginia Mennonite Church from the Civil War era until his death. He brought the Sunday school movement into Virginia, a move which resulted in a church split and the establishment of the Old Order Mennonite Church in 1900. During the Coffman years the West Virginia mission work was begun, and his son, John S. Coffman, the evangelist, held the first "protracted" revival services in the Virginia Conference. It is not surprising, then, that he would use women as deaconesses when he felt the need.

Virginia church historian, Harry A. Brunk, in his book, *History of Mennonites in Virginia, 1727-1900*, Vol. I, gave only limited space to the ordination of deaconesses, their work seemingly of less historical importance than that of the ordained men. Brunk did, however, make several references



Elizabeth Heatwole Brunk (1857-1928) was ordained June 25, 1905: "A quiet woman who fulfilled her deaconess duties in an unassuming manner."

to deaconesses in his book:

"The wife of Preacher David Rhodes (Magdalena Rhodes) was referred to as deaconess," who was ordained by Samuel Coffman sometime before the Civil War. Brunk also wrote, "In 1882, votes were taken for two deaconesses at Weavers Church and sisters Annie and Susanna Brunk were chosen and ordained at that time." There was an additional reference from 1889, "Betsy Showalter and Sarah Sharpes were chosen by majority and ordained."¹

Most of Brunk's research about this period came from the diaries and papers of L. J. Heatwole, who used the word "ordain" whenever he wrote about the installation of deaconesses.

Eleven deaconesses were chosen

during the Samuel Coffman years (1861-1894): Elizabeth Rhodes, Magdalena Rhodes, Rebecca Burkholder, Elizabeth Hartman, Annie Brunk, Susanna Hartman Brunk, Elizabeth Showalter, Sarah Sharpes, Magdalene Rhodes, Frances Heatwole and Sarah Coffman.

Susanna Brunk was one of the most influential deaconesses of this era. Although her husband, Samuel Brunk, was a layman, she was ordained to serve as deaconess because she was a faithful member whose ability and integrity was unquestioned. She served as deaconess from 1882-1913, and was well-regarded by her peers.

Susanna Brunk saw that women in the Midwest were serving in an organized way and she proposed to L.

J. Heatwole that the women of the Middle District be allowed to start a sewing circle. He liked the idea, but others of the Ministerial Council felt that the women could not manage such a project. Eventually, the plan was approved, and on March 21, 1908, the first meeting was held. Susanna Brunk served as manager of the sewing circle, which was held in her home for many years.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole (1852-1932) wrote an obituary for Susanna Brunk in the October, 1913, *Gospel Herald*:

"On March 19, 1889, Susanna Brunk was called to the office of deaconess by her home congregation (Weavers), and from the date of the Organization of the Sister's Aid Society on March 21, 1908, she became its director as well as one of its most active members. In her work as deaconess she was active and faithful in visiting the sick and relieving the distressed and needy of her own sex."²

L. J. Heatwole wrote in his *Church Record Book* that "two sisters were chosen by voice of the church to serve as deaconesses, viz., Lizzie (Elizabeth) Brunk (of Elias), and Marietta Detweiler (of David). Their ordination was set for Sunday, June 25, 1905."³ Elizabeth Heatwole Brunk was the mother of Harry A. Brunk, historian, who remembered his mother as a quiet woman who fulfilled her deaconess duties in an unassuming manner.

Marietta Detweiler, ordained the same day as Elizabeth Brunk, was a forthright woman. The Detweilers had moved to Virginia from Pennsylvania. Grace Showalter noted: "She must have had an overpowering personality if she came in from the outside and was ordained so soon as a non-

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Microfilms of Volumes I-L of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* are available from: University Microfilms, Inc., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Virginian."⁴ The Detweilers left Virginia and moved to Colorado, then on to the Filer area in Idaho. When a Mennonite congregation was established at Filer, Marietta (or someone at Filer) sent her deaconess certificate to the Pacific Coast Conference, assuming it would be recognized by that body. The reply of the Conference executive committee follows:

"Dear Sister, Having in hand your deaconess certificate which has been forwarded to us, the ministerial body of the Pacific Coast conference now in session at the zion church we wish you God's richest blessings in your service for the Master as a Sister in the church and tenderly inform you that thus far this body has not seen fit to appoint, or authorize, regular deaconesses and kindly ask you to receive the certificate as personal property until the Lord may direct otherwise."⁵

The Lord evidently never directed the Pacific Coast Conference otherwise, or else they failed to hear. The congregation at Filer, Idaho, however, did use Marietta's gifts. It is not known whether all Virginia deaconesses received a "deaconess certificate" upon their ordination, but this story raises the interesting question.

Six women were ordained as deaconesses during the L. J. Heatwole years (1893-1932): Marietta Detweiler, Elizabeth Heatwole Brunk, Emma Showalter, Mary Blosser, Rebecca Hartman and Mollie Grace Coffman Heatwole.

The Ordination Process

Deaconesses were publically ordained. Names were suggested by the congregation to the bishop in a public council meeting. The women were chosen according to the majority of votes they received and one, two or three were ordained according to the number of places that needed to be filled; the names and the date for the ordination were announced at the meeting. At the later public ordination service, the lot was not used. The candidates were seated on the front bench. At the end of the service they were told to stand and were asked several questions by the bishop about their willingness to serve. They were given the charge while on their knees, followed by prayer. There is no record

that the ordination service included the "laying on of hands."⁶

This same ritual was not always used. The ordination of Mollie Grace Heatwole, on October 14, 1921, is recorded. Elizabeth Heatwole Grove, daughter of L. J. Heatwole, wrote this account to Joseph Heatwole concerning the ordination of his mother:

"When Papa (L. J. Heatwole) announced that your mother had been chosen, he came down off the pulpit and asked her (she was sitting on one of the front benches) if she would accept the charge. This seemed to be such a shock that she sat still. He asked her two or three times before she responded and was duly ordained. I don't know if they ever did that way before or since, but it seems that at most other times they were notified first and ordained at a later date."⁷

On July 26, 1928, Bettie Keener and Pearl Suter were selected and ordained as deaconesses by Bishop S. H. Rhodes. The process again was a bit different than described above. One of the Suter children remembers that the preachers were standing around the two women so that their mother could not be seen. Another remembers that the women were called to stand up at the end of the service and that the husbands stood with their wives during the ordination, that the women knelt forward as the bishop prayed, and that the bishop did not "lay hands" on them during the prayer. Another remembers that no congregational vote was taken publicly, but that the names were chosen by the Ministerial Council and the date of ordination announced to the congregation for a later date.⁸

S. H. Rhodes (1880-1957), who was ordained bishop in 1932, appointed five women as deaconesses during the years he served: Lydia Shank, Sophia Brubaker, Bettie Keener, Pearl Suter and Ada Neff Lehman. All were wives of ministers.

In 1947, Daniel W. Lehman (1893-1972), long-time teacher at Eastern Mennonite College, was ordained bishop to help S. H. Rhodes. Bishop Lehman's wife, Ada Neff Lehman, served with him, doing the work of a deaconess, even though she was not officially recognized at first. A notation was found in the minutes of the Middle District Ministerial Quarterly Meeting, held on May 9, 1952: "Passed, that Sister Ada Lehman (Mrs. D. W.)



Mollie Grace Coffman Heatwole (1883-1956): Was asked two or three times before she responded affirmatively "and was duly ordained."

be recognized as a deaconess."⁹

That same month, Ada Lehman was "officially recognized" as a Middle District deaconess, since she had been doing deaconess duties as the wife of the bishop. Her name and the date of ordination was announced by the Ministerial Council. The ceremony was a simple one: She sat alone on the front bench until Bishop S. H. Rhodes, who preached the sermon, came down off the platform and had her stand. He asked her several questions concerning her willingness to fulfill the duties of a deaconess and then had a prayer. Whether she stood or knelt for the prayer or whether her husband, Daniel Lehman, stood with her is not remembered. Again, no public vote was taken; the decision to ordain was made by the Ministerial Council. Although it was called "officially recognized" rather than "ordained," the same ceremony was used.¹⁰

Ada Neff Lehman was the last deaconess in the Middle District. She served until D. W. Lehman retired as bishop in 1963.

The Role of the Deaconess

Elizabeth Heatwole Grove described the role of the deaconesses in Virginia Conference:

"The work of the deaconess was to visit the women and girls, members of



Ada Neff Lehman (1892-1980), the last of the deaconesses, was "officially recognized" as a Middle District deaconess in 1952.

the church who were out of line in dress, morals and conduct in general, and needed instruction and help; to assist at communion and baptizing services; and to assist in the foot-washing services by supervising the procedure for the women."¹¹

Illustrations of how this role emerged can be found. In May 1894 a question came before Conference concerning the noise inside and outside the churches during communion services by those who did not commune. This action was taken: "Resolved that it be the duty of our deacons and deaconesses to suppress all disorder at our communion services and public worship."¹² And again in May, 1902, Conference took an action: "Resolved that the deacons and deaconesses in charge see that this ordinance (footwashing) be observed in as orderly a way as possible."¹³ In 1903 an action by Conference ruled

that it was proper for the covering to be "removed from the head of the woman applicant by the deaconess" before baptism. This custom was later discontinued.¹⁴

L. J. Heatwole recorded on November 25, 1893, that "grave charges are reported against a certain sister as being guilty of adultery."¹⁵ Deaconesses Fannie Heatwole and Sarah Coffman were asked to visit her.

During the problem years in the Virginia Conference when a group of members broke away and started the Old Order Mennonite Church, Harry A. Brunk noted: "The records show that the deaconesses, Susanna Brunk and Sarah Sharpes, were called upon to visit several of the sisters."¹⁶ It was not considered appropriate for the deacons to work alone with women members, so the deaconesses were asked to help.

One granddaughter remembered

that her deaconess grandmother, Elizabeth Brunk, baked the communion bread, made the communion grape juice, and laundered the footwashing towels. She also remembered that her grandmother went to visit a woman member who needed counselling before the communion service.¹⁷

The deaconesses also had charge of the food served at Conference time; they decided and announced what food should be served, even though they were not Conference members. The tasks assigned to deaconesses included whatever the ordained brethren felt pertained to "women's work."¹⁸

By the 1920s the ordained men preached at a circuit of congregations, according to a calendar method. These deaconess women served with their husbands as they went their ministerial rounds, including churches in the mountains of Virginia and West Virginia.

Changes in the Deaconess Role

The role of the deaconess has changed through the years. In the early years women were chosen for their abilities and their faithfulness to the church. In later years it seemed that one needed to be the wife of an ordained man to be chosen.

In the early years deaconesses were used and their advice sought whenever it was necessary to admonish women members of the church. In later years the duties of the deaconess were becoming onerous, as the rules in the church were changing. They were expected to hold the line on the rules of dress for women at times of baptism and communion. They were often asked to make coverings and plain dresses for the applicants, if they could not provide their own.

One person interviewed remembers that when she was a teenager she saw Deaconess Sophia Brubaker come out of the anteroom at Bank Church with one of the women to be baptized. She asked her mother what was going on. Her mother replied that the deaconess was seeing that the woman was properly dressed for the baptismal service.

Were the bishops beginning to ask the deaconesses to do the task of

monitoring the dress of women church members, which they were unwilling to do themselves?

The End of the Deaconess Era

Exactly 100 years after the ordination of the first deaconess, this system of ordaining women came to an end. In a ministerial prayer meeting held at the home of Bishop D. W. Lehman on July 10, 1961, he asked for the appointment of Pauline Blosser and Alice Horst as deaconesses. As bishops' wives, they were doing deaconess duties, just as Ada Neff Lehman had done before she was ordained, and some people felt that they should also be recognized. The group of ordained men that evening decided that a study should be made of the history, the need and the purpose of the office of deaconess in the Middle District. Joseph Heatwole was chosen to do this study and one month later gave his report.

It was not until January 15, 1962, at a ministerial prayer meeting at the Daniel W. Lehman home, that the following recommendations were made by the three bishops, Daniel W. Lehman, Mahlon Blosser and Lloyd Horst:

"1. That we discontinue calling and appointing deaconesses to serve the district at large.

"2. That we recognize every bishop's, pastor's and deacon's wife as being called to serve in the office of deaconess and shall perform such duties as:

a. Extend the hand of fellowship and kiss of charity at baptisms at the request of the officiating officials.

b. Assist in the preparation of communion.

c. Direct the feetwashing (sic) of sisters.

d. Assist her husband in visitation and assist him in her sphere of his duties.


e. Attend to any assignment that may be given them by the officials of the congregation."¹⁹

The bishops' recommendations were adopted, and in 1962, the ordination of deaconesses in the Middle District of the Virginia Conference came to an end. The work of the ordained deaconesses, who took their calling seriously and felt they

were an integral part of the work of the church, was taken over by the wives of the ordained men by virtue of their husband's position in the church. No longer would the function of deaconess be recognized in its own right by ordination. The work of women in the church was now given to wives of ordained men, to "assist him in her sphere of his duties."²⁰

Why was the office of deaconess discontinued? It is clear that the role of the deaconess depended on how significant their task was viewed by the ordained men. As male leadership roles became more consolidated in the church, there seemed to be less need for designated women to share the work. It is possible that the duties of the deaconess had become so mundane, as interpreted by the leaders of the later years, that the vision and possibilities of the deaconess office in the life and growth of the church no longer seemed important.

The Virginia Mennonite congregations were becoming more autonomous and the oversight of Conference at large was no longer viable. The district leaders (bishops, ministers, and deacons) were being replaced by pastors, elders and council members within each congregation. The rules of each congregation differed, so that it was no longer necessary that the dress of women be monitored before baptism and communion. By this time the difference in the roles of men and women in the church and in society were diminished. Since the 1990s the leadership of women in the church had largely been accepted in the Virginia Mennonite Conference.

It is, however, important to remember that there was an era in Virginia Mennonite history when honest and worthy women were chosen by the church to the office of deaconess and ordained. They had a special work in the church which they performed with dignity and honor. 

Ruth Krady Lehman of Harrisonburg, Virginia, did most of the research for this essay while a student at Eastern Mennonite Seminary.

¹ Brunk, Harry A., *History of Mennonites in Virginia, 1727-1900*, Volume I, Chapter IX (Verona, Va.: McClure Printing Company, Inc., 1959), 346.

² Heatwole, Lewis J., Obituary for the *Gospel Herald*, October, 1913, 479. Heatwole's year of ordination does not agree with Brunk's, 1882.

³ Heatwole, Lewis J., *Church Record Book*, 356, Eastern Mennonite College, Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives.

⁴ Rich, Elaine Sommers, *Mennonite Women: A Story of God's Faithfulness, 1683-1983* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1983), 90.

⁵ Rich, 91.

⁶ Interview with Mary Suter and Grace Grove, August 23, 1986.

⁷ Grove, Elizabeth Heatwole. Paper written to Joseph Heatwole for a report on Deaconesses to Middle District Council (handwritten), 2. Eastern Mennonite College, Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives.

⁸ Interviews with Margaret Brunk, Frances Harman, and Daniel Suter, March 30, 1989.

⁹ Minutes of Middle District Ministerial Quarterly Meeting, May 9, 1952.

¹⁰ Interview with Myra Lehman, March 21, 1989.

¹¹ Grove, op. cit., 3.

¹² Heatwole, L. J., C. H. Brunk, and Christian Good, *A History of the Mennonite Conference of Virginia and its Work: With a Brief Biographical Sketch of its Founders and Organizers* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1910), 42-43.

¹³ Heatwole, op. cit., 62.

¹⁴ Heatwole, 65.

¹⁵ Heatwole, Lewis J., *Diaries*, November 25, 1893, 18. Eastern Mennonite College, Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives.

¹⁶ Brunk, op. cit., Volume I, Chapter XIX, 447.

¹⁷ Interview with Maude Good Heatwole, March 30, 1989.

¹⁸ Grove, op. cit., 2.

¹⁹ Minutes of Middle District Ministerial Prayer Meeting, January 15, 1962, 165-166.

²⁰ Minutes, op. cit., 166.

Early Twentieth-Century Dutch-American Mennonite Contacts

By Gerlof Homan

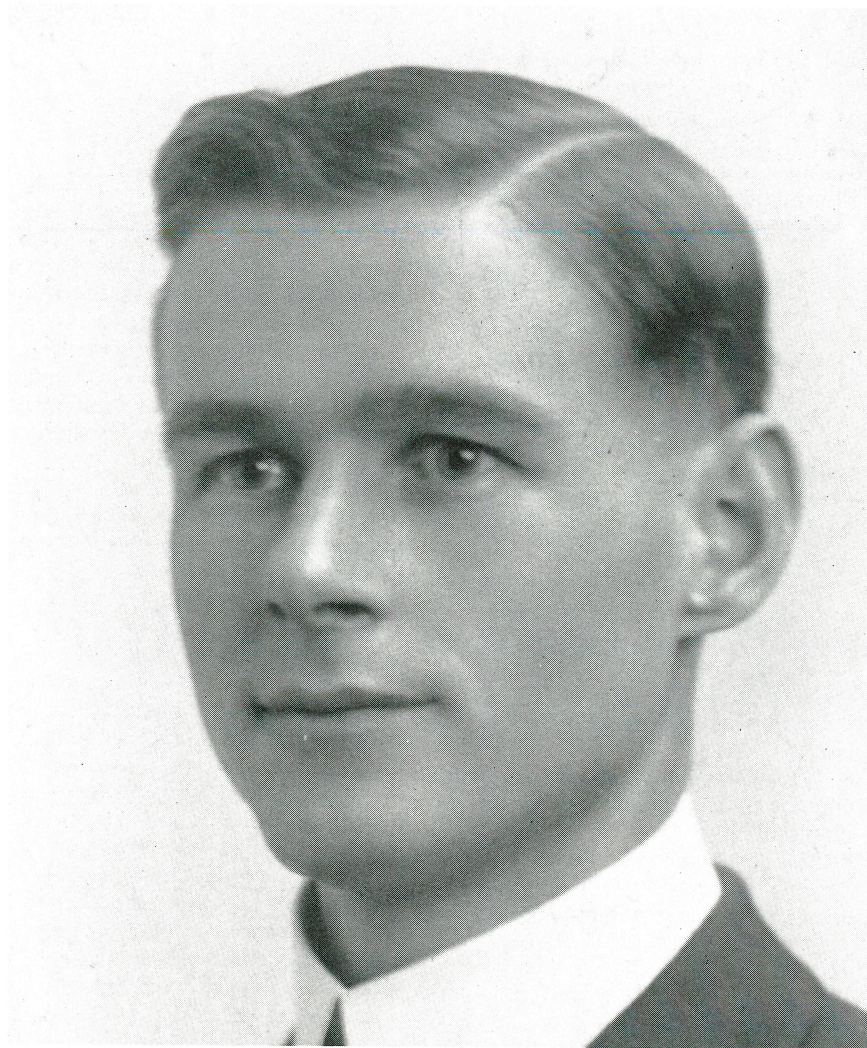
Mennonites have become a global community and establish and maintain contacts through organizations such as Mennonite World Conference and Mennonite Central Committee. Prior to World War I, Mennonites had very little contact with their brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. In those days there were no student or scholarly exchange programs or foreign trainees living with North American or European families. Nor were North American Mennonites doing relief work in Europe.

During this period, communications were not what they are today. The principal contact between Mennonites in North America and Europe and Russia in those days was family correspondence between those who had left the Old World for the New. It would be important and interesting to study contemporary literature to determine precisely how much Mennonites on both sides of the Atlantic knew about each other and if there were many misconceptions.

World War I and the post-war era provided American, European, and Russian Mennonites with opportunities to become better acquainted with each other and to build bridges. During these years, several American Mennonites performed relief work with the American Friends Service Committee in France and Central Europe. Others did similar work in the Near East.

In 1920 Mennonite Central Committee initiated its first major relief effort in Russia. Much of this relief work was done in cooperation with Dutch Mennonites. Through this cooperative endeavor American and Dutch Mennonites learned much about each other. But some Americans also learned more about their Dutch brothers and sisters through contacts with three Dutch Mennonites, Miss Ada Cnoop Koopmans, T.O.M. Hylkema, and D. Woelinga.

Their correspondence with Jacob C. Meyer tells us something about these early efforts by Dutch and American



Jacob C. Meyer (1888-1968) volunteered for service in Northern France after World War I, corresponded with Dutch Mennonites, and taught history at Goshen College and Western Reserve University (now Case Western) in Cleveland. Photo: Archives of the Mennonite Church, J.C. Meyer Collection

Mennonites to learn to know each other. This article discusses this early twentieth-century Dutch-American Mennonite contact.¹

Ada Cnoop Koopmans came from an old Dutch Mennonite family. She was born in Haarlem on June 4, 1898. On March 3, 1917, she joined the Haarlem Mennonite Congregation, one of the largest Mennonite churches in the Netherlands. After World War I

Miss Cnoop Koopmans volunteered to work for the American Friends Service Committee in France where she met American Mennonites.²

Among the American Mennonites was Jacob C. Meyer (1888-1968). Meyer was born in Sterling, Ohio, and during World War I held master's degrees from the University of Indiana and Harvard. During World War I he was drafted and served as a conscientious

objector in Camp Jackson, South Carolina. After the war he volunteered to work for the American Friends Service Committee in Northern France. While in France he also played an important role in launching the Young People's Movement.³ Later he obtained a Ph.D. at Harvard in history and taught for some time at Goshen College and for many years at Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.⁴

Miss Cnoop Koopmans provided Meyer with information on Dutch Mennonites. Apparently, Meyer's curiosity about his Dutch brothers and sisters was aroused, but she could not answer many of his questions. She suggested he write to her father in Haarlem, W. Cnoop Koopmans. But the latter could not answer some of Meyer's questions either and referred him to Teerd O. M. H. Hylkema (1888-1968), at that time Mennonite pastor in Giethoorn. Hylkema was a very influential Dutch Mennonite leader who did much for the Gemeentedag Beweging or Retreat Movement, Mennonite peace concerns, and relief for Russian Mennonites after World War I and II.⁵ Below is Hylkema's letter which has been slightly edited for punctuation.

Giethoorn, May 25, 1920
Dear Friend,

I received your letter from brother Cnoop Koopmans, Haarlem, the letters written by you and brother Allen Y. King.⁶ I hope you will pass this answer to him too.

But to introduce myself, I am one of the ministers ("teachers" as we call them) which the Mennonite congregations in Holland have since the last century; some of them since the last 50 years. I am in service of one of our largest village congregations at Giethoorn, in the East and North of Holland near Friesland. 3/4 of the surface of our good earth is here water or something that is neither water or land. Our village itself is called Dutch Venice. Here some centuries ago could our persecuted brothers hide themselves very well, and so we have here still a very large congregation (500 baptized members) which is an exception for the country.⁷ In the big towns you find congregations of 4000 and more members. But these are exceptions too. Most of our congregations are very small, some of them of no more than 30, 50 members;

the larger ones 100, 200. Altogether [sic] we have c. 65,000 Mennonites (children included) which means 30,000 members, I think.

Being theol. doct'erandus⁸ I hoped to write a book about the Quakers. Ten years ago I was in England and was very much impressed by the life which I found under the Quakers. It has helped myself to come to Jesus Christ, and to feel more than before how great was the lack of responsibility-feeling and of work in our congregations. We are a very quiet people, living in the world as each other, even doing military service as each other, having nothing to be proud of than our past. Some of the chauvinists, we have too, will not agree with me, but let it be as it is and that is: that our only congregation-life and work is centred around the minister and exists in listening to the sermon at Sunday morning, and some care for the poor by the elders. That is in most of our congregations the only life, the only tie which binds the congregation, except then what sleeps in the hearts of the old Mennonite families of a "Mennonite-spirit"-"doopsgezinde geest." The ministers themselves have in the larger congregations a very busy life as they have all things to do, which the members of the congregations have left to them.

In the last two years there is begun a new movement, which we call Gemeentedag (Gemeente= congregation, dag=day) Movement which tries to unite the Mennonites who feel the responsibility of congregation of Christ, who will do their best, to work for a truer and better congregation; now to day, except a very few, the congregations do not care about mission work or the need of the world; but the Gemeentedag-Movement, if it will be lead so as we hope, will bring a good change in this. In my own congregation at Giethoorn we have done good social work for the whole village; here there are many who feel for love service more then for fighting in the army. But this is still exception. Only we hope. I myself am chairman of the Gemeentedag Movement which hath now some 900 helpers.⁹ Last year I had the intention to go to England and America to study the Friends (Quakers) there and of course to visit the Mennonites then at the same time. But it was impossible to get a passport for America, and I stayed half a year in

England living there with the Friends and in their life and work.

We were glad to receive your letter and nearly at the same time one of Alvin Miller¹⁰ from Paris (who was later some days with us in Holland and in Giethoorn too). The Committee for the Gemeentedag Movement decided to work for a closer fellowship with other Mennonites, that we may become stronger all in the work and life which Christ gave us. So we hope to have some Ukrainian-Mennonites at our Gemeentedag this year; and we will be glad if these letters of you and me, may be the first of a regular close connection, which will have our whole heart, and what we hope that may reach the high-point of personal contact, of life-and work-contact in Jesus Christ. So do tell of you there, send me your papers that we may write the news and tidings of your congregational life and work, there and in our papers. If there is some of you who can read Dutch we shall send our papers to you. But to read them well it is necessary that one of you marks your papers or sends a letter once a month, to let us feel what is the real value of some articles, or things that are not written down, but perhaps of more weight than an article. Will you do that?

Br. King asked for some information concerning the European Mennonites as to history, present numbers, location, condition and welfare in general, with special reference to those of Holland and Russia. It is rather difficult to give in a few lines what he asked. The history of Menn. in Europe is not described in one general work. We have a lot of literature about Mennonites in our library of the Mennonite Congregation at Amsterdam. The catalogue is a big book of 360 pages containing only titles of books, manuscripts, pictures, a.s.o., a.s.o. who are in the library. It is the best and I think the one real good library about Mennonites and contains contemporary literature from the beginning till now. There is a treasure waiting for men who will help our congregation in the future by the past. Of course a great deal of the books, manuscripts, a.s.o. are in Dutch.

A rather good book about Mennonites in Holland is of Blaupot ten Cate c. 1840. 5 volumes which gives all details and later the origins of Mennonites from the Waldenzen.¹¹ The only recent book is by a lady A. Brons,



Benjamin H. Unruh, Orie O. Miller and T.O.M. Hylkema in London in the Spring of 1921 while Hylkema was studying at the Quaker college, Woodbrooke, in Selly Oak near Birmingham, England. Hylkema worked for renewal among the Dutch Mennonites. Photo: Archives of the Mennonite Church, MCC Collection

Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale der Altevangelische Taufgezinnten oder Mennoniten, 1912. (Origin, development and history of the old-evangelical "Doopsgezinde," or Mennonites). It is in German, 403 pages.¹² You can find in it some particulars about the Mennonites in America and can see from them how she writes. The history in Europe is written down in scientific manner and with a warm heart for the congregation. If you should like to have it (but it may be in one of your libraries) than I can send it to you easily. Cannot we change, that you send to me a history of the Menn. in America? Is that of Prof. C. Henry Smith not the best one?¹³ That about the history. You cannot give a sketch in a letter, I think.

Recent numbers:

- in Holland c. 130 congregations 65,000 souls.
- in Germany 70 congregations c. 18,000 souls.

- in France a very few with not much life (1200)
- In Schwitserland (Schweiz) 8 with 1500 souls.

About Galizie and Russia you cannot tell much now. I always think that the best Mennonites in Europe can be found under the Mennonites in Russia.

But now I have to finish.

May your home and work be blessed.

Yours sincerely
T.O. Hylkema

Meyer also corresponded with Douwe E. Woelinga (1882-1948), a prominent Dutch Mennonite layman. Woelinga was a devout Mennonite who hoped to restore many traditional Mennonite values long discarded by Dutch Mennonites. He was one of the few Dutch Mennonites at that time who carried on an international correspondence with other Mennonites.¹⁴ Because Russian

Mennonites knew Woelinga they turned to him for help when a delegation arrived in 1920 in the Netherlands seeking assistance for their people. In November 1920 Dutch Mennonites organized the Algemeene Commissie voor Buitenlandse Nooden [General Committee of Foreign Needs] of which Woelinga became secretary-treasurer.

Woelinga was enthusiastic about the prospect of meeting American Mennonites. In July 1919 Egbertus M. ten Cate (1868-1926), Mennonite pastor at Apeldoorn, expressed his reservations about possible successful contacts with American Mennonites because of their different religious and theological ideas. Judging especially on the basis of two articles in the *Gospel Herald*, he concluded American Mennonites lived in an entirely different world. Unlike the Dutch Mennonites, the American Mennonites had not been affected by the flood of new ideas of modern liberalism which had "struck away" Christian dogmatism. Therefore, the Americans would not respond to a Dutch call of, "Mennonites of all lands unite!"

Woelinga agreed there were differences, and he could even imagine being banned from an American congregation because of his "impurity of doctrine." However, in spite of these differences he would still call them brothers because they walked more closely "to the commands of the Lord" and had preserved their principles better than most Dutch Mennonites who had embraced "modern liberalism" and whose ship was stranded. "America, I greet you!" he wrote.¹⁶ Below is his letter to Meyer.

Vlissingen, March 13,
1921(Netherlands)
Mr. Jacob C. Meyer
Goshen (Ind.)
Dear Brother!

I thank you very much for your kind letter and Christmas greetings of Decb. 5th last. I enjoy the greeting of the friends who had been in relief work in Europe.

Even if it be on a modest scale, the Mennonites of Holland hope sincerely to be able to assist that great beautiful work to which our brethren in America have set such a splendid example; an example which always

has and which still put us to the blush. I am glad that the relief work brings us closer contact than before. I trust that a more international contact shall do much good to all of us. So help us God!

As secretary-treasurer of our "General Relief Committee of the Mennonites" in Holland, I've much business, even too much. That has been the only reason why I never favored you yet with a reply until now. You will be so kind enough to excuse me? Your interesting letter has been lying all the time (since Decb. 25th) on my desk.

You are teaching an important branch on the Goshen College-history and political science. I am not conversant with the schools in America. Is it secondary instruction or academic instruction? The Mennonites of Holland have hardly any schools of their own; nevertheless their influence on public instruction has been great especially in the last century.

I am glad to hear that you and some others still like to keep more in touch with your brethren in Europe. Since long I feel the desirableness of having a Mennonite world unity!

We should have an International Bureau, and every country or branch its International Secretary. A branch of the Mennonites in Holland appointed me as such already (intern. secr.).

Br. O.B. Gerig¹⁷ from Smithville (Ohio) wrote me once: "If Mennonites of Europe and America could have cooperation before the war they might have been able to bear a stronger testimony than in this way," and I agree with these words.

Last summer I corresponded with br. Gerig on The Mennonite Young People's Conference" and other subjects, but since July 1 did not hear anything more from him. Do you know him and how he is? His address?

I hope you will favor me with a reply for I shall be very glad to correspond with you. I also correspond with John Horsch¹⁸ at Scottsdale, Pa., and Prof. J.G. Ewert¹⁹ at Hillsboro, Kansas.

With best wishes, I remain
your brother
Douwe Woelinga

P.S. You have a German name. Are you born in America? or in Europe?

L



Ada Cnoop Koopmans, one of the two in the center, from the Haarlem Mennonite congregation in The Netherlands, served in France where she met American Mennonites. If any Bulletin readers can identify persons in this photo, please send us a note. Photo: Archives of the Mennonite Church, J.C. Meyer Collection

Gerlof D. Homan teaches at Illinois State University and has a forthcoming book-length publication on conscientious objectors during World War I.

¹The correspondence can be found in box 3, folder 3 of the Jacob C. Meyer papers, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

²Information on Miss Cnoop Koopmans kindly provided by Dr. S.L. Verheus, Librarian of Mennonite Congregation in Haarlem. On the Cnoop Koopmans family, see also *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1963), s.v. "Cnoop Koopmans."

³On the Young People's Movement see *Report of General Mennonites in France in Reconstruction Work. Held in Clermont-en-Argonne, Meuse, France, June 20-22, 1919* (N.p., n.d.) and *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1957), s.v. "Young People's Conference."

⁴On Meyer see Jacob C. Meyer, "Reflections of a Conscientious Objector in World War I," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 41 (1967): 79-96. A. Warkentin and Melvin Gingerich, eds., *Who's Who among Mennonites* (North Newton, Kans., 1943), 166-67. Additional biographical information kindly provided by Dennis Stoesz, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

⁵On Hylkema see *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1991), s.v. "Hylkema, Teerd Oed Ma Hylke" and Peter and Elfrieda Dyck, *Up from the Rubble* (Scottsdale, 1991), passim. In order to dramatize the plight of the Russian Mennonites Hylkema wrote *De geschiedenis*

van de Doopsgezinde gemeenten in Rusland in de oorlogs- en revolutiejaren 1914 tot 1920 (Steenwijk, 1920). A little later a second edition appeared (Flushing, 1921) and a German edition, *Die Mennoniten-Gemeinden in Russland während der Kriegs- und Revolutionsjahre, 1914 bis 1920* (Heilbrunn a. Neckar, 1921).

⁶Allen Y. King (1899-) was a friend of J.C. Meyer who spent most of his adult life in Cleveland, Ohio, as a public school administrator.

⁷On the Giethoorn congregation see *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1957), s.v. "Giethoorn." Currently, the Giethoorn congregation has about 180 members. *Doopsgezind Jaarboekje, 1991* (Amsterdam 1991), 72-73.

⁸Theology doctorandus. This is not an academic title but indicates the student has met all the requirements for the doctor's degree except the dissertation.

⁹On the *Gemeentedag* Movement see *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1955), s.v. "Broederschapswerk, Commissie voor Doopsgezind" and C. Nijdam, "Remembrance: The First Ten Years of the Gemeentedag Movement in Holland," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 2 (1928), 54-68.

¹⁰Alvin Miller (1883-1981) was instructor at Kent State Teachers College, Kent, Ohio. In 1919 he took a leave of absence to do relief work in Europe Russia. P.C. Hiebert and Orie O. Miller, *Feeding the Hungry: Russia Famine, 1919, 1925. American Mennonite Relief Operations under Auspices of Mennonite Central Committee* (Scottsdale, 1929), passim; D. Woelinga, "Nood van en

hulp aan de Mennisten van Rusland 1920-1921," *Doopsgezind Jaarboekje*, 1922 (Amsterdam, 1922), 74, 83; Warkentin and Gingerich, *Who's Who among Mennonites*, 167-168.

¹¹ Steven Blaupot ten Cate (1807-1884), Mennonite pastor, member of the lower house of the Dutch legislature, inspector of public instruction in the province of Groningen, and historian, wrote five volumes on Dutch Mennonite history that are still standard works today. They are *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Friesland* (Leeuwarden, 1839), *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Groningen, Overijssel en Oost-Friesland*. 2 vols. (Groningen, 1842), and *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht en Gelderland*. 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1847). *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1955), s.v. "Cate, Steven Blaupot ten," Nelson Springer and A.J. Klassen, eds., *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1631-1961. 2 vols. (Scottsdale, 1977), nos. 2211, 2221, 2231.

¹² The author was Anna Brons (1810-1902) who wrote, *Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale der Taufgesinnten oder Mennoniten in kurzen Zügen übersichtlich dargestellt von Frauenhand* (Norden, 1884). A second edition appeared in 1891 and a third, brought up to date, by E.M. ten Cate in 1912. *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1957), s.v. "Brons, Anna," Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, nos. 64 and 65.

¹³ C. Henry Smith (1875-1948), American Mennonite historian wrote inter alia *Mennonites of America* (Scottsdale, 1909). There are three 1909 editions. *Mennonites of America* was Smith's dissertation.

¹⁴ Information kindly provided by his son, H.D. Woelinga, a minister from Uithoorn, the Netherlands.

¹⁵ On the Commissie see *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1963), s.v. "Fonds voor Buitenlandse Noden."

¹⁶ For this discussion between Ten Cate and Woelinga see Ten Cate, "Over buitenlandse Doopsgezinden," *De Zondagsbode*, June 29, 1919 and Woelinga, "Over de gemeenschap van Amerikaanse en Nederlandse Doopsgezinden," *De Zondagsbode*, July 13, 1919.

¹⁷ Orrie B. Gerig (1894-1976) was born in Smithville, Ohio, and served as a conscientious objector in World War I and later with the Friends Service Committee in France. After the war he worked for many years for the League of Nations Secretariat in Geneva and later held various important State Department positions especially pertaining to work with the United Nations. Warkentin and Gingerich, *Who's Who among Mennonites*, 81; U.S. Department of State, *The Biographic Register 1960* (Washington, D.C., 1960), 288; *New York Times*, March 5, 1976. Additional information kindly supplied by his son, John S. Gerig of Reston, Virginia.

¹⁸ John Horsch (1867-1917) Mennonite historian and writer. *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1955), s.v. "Horsch John."

¹⁹ Jacob G. Ewert (1874-1923). Professor at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas, and journalist who did much for World War I conscientious objectors and Mennonite relief to Russian Mennonites. *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1963), s.v. "Ewert, Jacob G."

Book Reviews

The Writings of Dirk Philips, 1504-1568. Classics of the Radical Reformation, Vol. 6. Translated and edited by Cornelius J. Dyck, William E. Keeney, and Alvin J. Beachy. Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1992. Pp. 701. \$44.95.

The writings of Dirk Philips in a new English translation, directly from the Dutch original, is a welcome addition to the primary source material available for the study of sixteenth-century Anabaptism. A biographical sketch and the brief introductions place the documents into the broader context of Dirk's life and ministry. The translation of such a large collection of writings is a formidable task; the editors are to be commended for their dedication and perseverance.

Because the leaders of the established church promoted false teaching and sanctioned the persecution of the faithful, the Anabaptists could not recognize them as true servants of God. They refused to participate in their worship services. They insisted that Christian faithfulness had to be expressed in outward, visible community, with believers' baptism as the sign of entry and the ban as the means of maintaining the purity of the church. The emphasis upon outward church forms brought the Anabaptists into conflict with the legal structures of their time.

By downplaying the outward forms and focusing upon the inward, invisible church, the Spiritualists were able to avoid persecution. They did take part in the life of the established church. Obbe Philips, the older brother of Dirk, became disillusioned in the latter part of the 1530s and left the Anabaptists. He moved in the direction of the Spiritualists—a very attractive option in an age of martyrdom.

The writings of Dirk Philips reflect his concern to remain faithful to the proper New Testament church order, even in the face of suffering. His discussion of Christian "ordinances" is an instructive reminder to those of us who have almost lost the meaning of this important New Testament concept. Dirk stipulated seven ordinances: ordination, sacraments (communion and baptism),

footwashing, discipline, neighbor love, crossbearing, and suffering.

Dirk Philips was very familiar with the biblical texts. He quoted freely from both testaments, and even at times referred to the Apocrypha. The Anabaptist movement was nurtured by an interest in the Scriptures. Dirk espoused a simple biblicism which was common within Anabaptism. In the section "The True Knowledge of God," he wrote:

"Faith believes all of God's words, and excepts none. For all of God's words are active as fire, and they are a shield for everyone who trusts in them. God has earnestly commanded that persons should add nothing to his words, nor subtract anything from them, but only act according to his word and command. And Christ says in the gospel: One shall live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Therefore, one must believe every word of God, and not only some of them when they please us, and reject others" (p. 260).

Many Mennonites do not share this simple biblicism. We tend to think such a position is much too naive. The issues are not that simple. We interpret biblical texts with far more scholarly sophistication. Yet in the end it is not always clear that we have made any gains in our faithfulness. By our alienation from the Anabaptist heritage, we have frequently only impoverished ourselves.

Inasmuch as Dirk Philips outlined the basic Anabaptist teachings in a very logical and consistent manner, it is somewhat surprising that his writings have been so widely ignored by contemporary Mennonites. A major stumbling block has been his strict view of the ban and shunning. The excessive use of the ban became the burden of Dutch Anabaptism. Both Menno Simons and Dirk Philips became embroiled in these tragic church controversies. As a consequence, Mennonites have not always been objective in their efforts to glean biblical truth from their writings.

What the Mennonites have found problematic, the Amish have seen in a much more positive light. The desire to maintain a pure church by the practice of the ban has been a central concern throughout their history. It is interesting that the Beachy Amish provided significant financial support for this translation project. To judge the contribution of Dirk Philips by his



*A Russian Mennonite mother with her children in 1910: "These stories, often told from a woman's point of view, offer a unique view of Russian Mennonite life in the past." Photo from **Mennonite Foods and Folkways from South Russia, Volume II***

involvement in the schismatic events near the end of his life is grossly unfair. Perhaps this volume will be one factor leading to a reassessment of his writings.

Erv Schlabbach, Millersburg, Ohio

Mennonite Foods and Folkways from South Russia, Volume I. Norma Jost Voth. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1990. Pp. 480. \$24.95.

Mennonite Foods and Folkways from South Russia, Volume II. Norma Jost Voth. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1991. Pp. 288. \$24.95.

The purpose of these books is to preserve not only the recipes, but also the memories and traditions of the author's South Russian Mennonite heritage. In Volume I, Voth traces the development of Russian Mennonite food. She shows how the food traditions of Mennonites who lived in Russia originated in the Netherlands of the 1530s, were under West Prussian influence when the Mennonites migrated to the Vistula Delta and were further modified by later migrations to the Steppes of South Russia.

With each move these people

assimilated many of the appealing foods of the people around them, while clinging to some of their Dutch food habits. Thus evolved a diet rich in dairy products such as milk, cream, butter (Dutch), a preference for pork (West Prussian), and a great variety of hearty breads and other flour-based dishes (Russian).

Following this fascinating food history, there are 400 recipes to keep alive the simple, hearty food tradition Mennonites brought with them from South Russia to North America. Some are too complicated and time consuming for North American Mennonite cooks today. Many, because of high fat content, do not reflect our present understandings of healthful food habits. Nevertheless, this collection is significant as a treasury of authentic, tested recipes from which to draw for special occasions that call for traditional Russian Mennonite foods. And the pithy, often humorous, Low German sayings sprinkled among the recipes should surely be passed on to future generations.

Volume II is a collection of stories of life in Russia during the "golden years" before the Bolshevik Revolution

and the dark years following the Revolution. Here is life on the North American prairies and in Paraguayan jungles. Voth interviewed people whose lives reached from Mennonite colonies in South Russia to settlements in North America; she also draws from letters and journals.

These stories, often told from a woman's point of view, offer a unique view of Russian Mennonite life in the past. Here is no philosophizing about the political events leading to the Revolution, nor opinions about problems in the Russian Mennonite church. Here are memories of picnics, weddings and watermelon feasts, and the celebration of butchering. Here are instructions for building a Russian-style brick oven for baking. One woman tells of converting giant ant hills into outdoor ovens in Paraguay and making thousands of mud bricks by hand. These are women of great stamina and faith, determined to make life as normal and bearable as possible during times of severe hardship.

One hundred recipes (all different from Volume I) are included in appropriate places among the stories. Photographs of people and places in South Russia provide a visual setting

for the stories and recipes. Each volume includes chapter notes documenting sources of information and a bibliography of sources and readings.

Using food as a window through which to view the past, Norma Jost Voth has made a unique and delightful addition to what has already been written about the Mennonite experience in South Russia.

Marilyn Helmuth Voran, Goshen, Indiana

Up From The Rubble: The Epic Rescue of Thousands of War-Ravaged Mennonite Refugees. Peter and Elfrieda Dyck. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1991. Pp. 384. \$14.95.

Heroes are essential to any work claiming "epic" in its name. This storyteller's story has heroes aplenty. The Dycks' unpretentious narrative style downplays the central role they held in bringing about the mass exodus of Russian and Prussian Mennonite refugees from Europe to South America and Canada. Readers are continually called to consider the source of the Dycks' inspiration, "*Soli Deo gloria*. Glory to God alone."

Yet one cannot help but be impressed by the Dycks, the other Mennonite Central Committee workers and the refugees themselves. The often moving stories are brought to life by a plethora of detail and substantial use of photos. Skeletal outlines of concurrent historical events help place the narratives in a broader historical context.

The recounting of cooperative efforts with military officials provides much food for reflection on church and state separations. One finishes the book grateful that this epic has been put in writing for the benefit of generations to come.

Jody Miller Shearer, New Orleans, Louisiana

Wood Chips. Lawrence (Papa) Brunk. Salem, Ohio: L.B. Brunk and Sons, 10460 SR 45, 1987. Pp. 114. \$3.95.

Lawrence Brunk of Salem, Ohio, wrote a series of newspaper columns combining Bruno woodburner marketing with his life stories and some homespun Christian proverbs. Brunk, in his younger years, joined with his brother George and provided the song leadership and financial

backing for what in the fifties became the Brunk tent revival campaigns.

Today, he and his sons own a manufacturing, heating and recreational vehicle business. This small book of newspaper notes from 1983 to 1987 has some autobiographical references and provides some insights into the life of a former Mennonite tent evangelist.

Levi Miller, Scottdale, Pennsylvania



Recent Publications

Balzer, Waldo H. and Alvin. **The Wonderful Story of the Balzers.** 1989. Pp. 121. Alvin Balzer, 19515 Rinaldi St., no. 52, Northridge, CA 91326.

Benner, Cheryl A. and Rachel T. Pellman. **The Country Paradise Quilt.** 1991. Pp. 224. \$12.95. Good Books, Intercourse, PA 17534.

Family History of Jacob and Lydia Neuenschwander 1920-1990. 1990. Pp. 63. Paul Neuenschwander, P.O. Box 14, Kidron, OH 44636.

Harris, Russell Gingrich. **The Peter Donner and Barbara Naffziger Donner Family.** 1990. Pp. 143.

Haury, Frederick Wilhelm, Jr. **Jakob Haury Descendants.** 1990. Pp. 41. \$7.00. Frederick Wilhelm Haury, Jr., 8810 LaGrima de Oro Rd., NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111.

Jantzen, Matilda Mueller. **The Biographical Genealogy of John Jacob and Magdalena (Funk) Showalter 1859-1990.** 1990. Pp. 98. Matilda Jantzen, 612 W. 9th St., Newton, KS 67114.

Kreider, Elizabeth Weaver. **A Christian Peacemaker's Journal.** 1991. \$5.95. Good Books, Intercourse, PA 17534.

Lehman, Lloyd W. **The Joseph J. Stutzman Family.** Pp. 171. Lloyd Lehman, 3712 Kayson St., Silver Spring, MD 20906.

Lichti, Willis. **Nicholas and Barbara (Schmidt) Lichti Ancestors and Descendants.** 1985. Pp. 146. \$9.00. Willis Lichti, Box 1044, New Hamburg, ON N0B 2G0

Martin, Lavon D. **The Descendants of Johannas Schlabach and Katherine Yoder.** 1990. Pp. 198. Lavon D. Martin, 3412 N. Elma Rd., Flushing, MI 48433.

Mease, Gladys Price. **The Abraham and Susan (Alderfer) Price Family: Their Ancestors and Descendants.**

1991. Pp. 121. Gladys Mease, 409 S. Riverside, Goshen, IN 46526.

Miller, Levi. **Our People, The Amish and Mennonites of Ohio,** Revised Edition. 1992. Pp. 64. \$4.95. Herald Press, Scottdale, PA 15683.

Miller, Marie. **Family Record of Dan T. Miller.** Pp. 87. Marie Miller 9348 Criswell Rd., Fredericksburg, OH 44672.

Moomaw, Robert A. **Moomaw/Mumma/Mumaw/Mumaugh Genealogy.** 1990. Pp. 541. Robert A. Moomaw, 2475 Underwood, no. 877, Houston, TX 77030.

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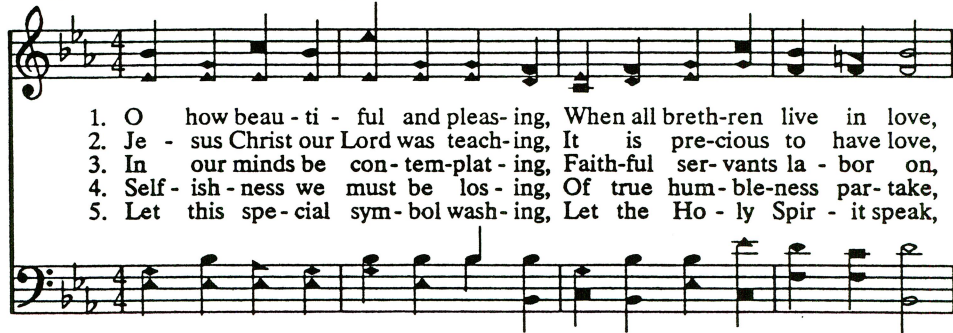
O How Beautiful And Pleasing

Wilmer D. Swope, 1990

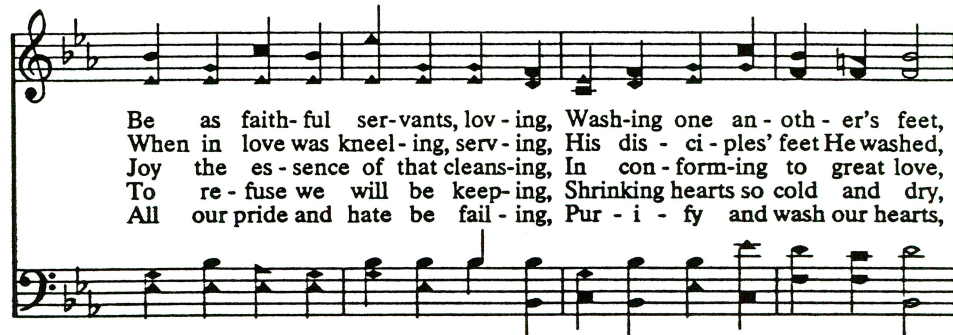
GAERWEN 8.7. D.

Welsh tune, anon.

based on literal tr. of Ach Wie So Lieblich
1804 Unpartheyisches Gesangbuch by Leonard Gross, 1990
German text attr. to Deacon Martin Mellinger 1763-1842



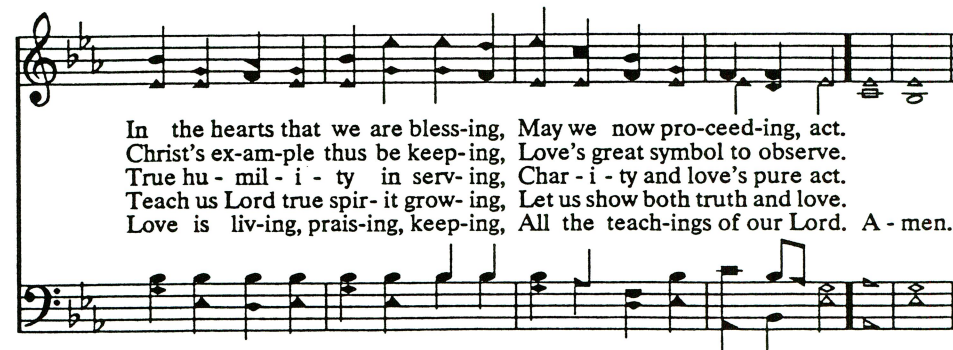
1. O how beau - ti - ful and pleas - ing, When all breth - ren live in love,
2. Je - sus Christ our Lord was teach - ing, It is pre - cious to have love,
3. In our minds be con - tem - plat - ing, Faith - ful ser - vants la - bor on,
4. Self - ish - ness we must be los - ing, Of true hum - ble - ness par - take,
5. Let this spe - cial sym - bol wash - ing, Let the Ho - ly Spir - it speak,



Be as faith - ful ser - vants, lov - ing, Wash - ing one an - oth - er's feet,
When in love was kneel - ing, serv - ing, His dis - ci - ples' feet He washed,
Joy the es - sence of that cleans - ing, In con - form - ing to great love,
To re - fuse we will be keep - ing, Shrinking hearts so cold and dry,
All our pride and hate be fail - ing, Pur - i - fy and wash our hearts,



May this hum - ble act be touch - ing, Let full u - ni - ty pre - vail,
Christ's ex - am - ple, truth re - veal - ing, In o - be - dience let us live,
Then in u - ni - ty be prais - ing, With - out en - vy lov - ing all,
Christ our vine is green and liv - ing, Graft - ed fruit - ing branch - es be,
Lord, Thy Spir - it send - ing fill - ing, Hearts of flesh cre - at - ed new,



In the hearts that we are bless - ing, May we now pro - ceed - ing, act.
Christ's ex - am - ple thus be keep - ing, Love's great symbol to observe.
True hu - mil - i - ty in serv - ing, Char - i - ty and love's pure act.
Teach us Lord true spir - it grow - ing, Let us show both truth and love.
Love is liv - ing, prais - ing, keep - ing, All the teach - ings of our Lord. A - men.

Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society Members Share their Heritage

By Hope Kauffman Lind

In spite of a continuing Mennonite presence for 115 years, Oregon has one of the smaller regional concentrations of Mennonites in North America. Groups at present include the Mennonite Church, the largest, and often called the Old Mennonites; unaffiliated Mennonites, some related to Bible Mennonite Fellowship or Western Conservative Mennonite Fellowship, most of whom previously held Mennonite Church membership; General Conference Mennonites; Mennonite Brethren; and Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (Holdermans).

Membership approaches 5,000, including several Hispanic congregations. Other Oregon church groups with some historical affinity to Mennonites are Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Church (formerly Evangelical Mennonite Brethren), Brethren in Christ, and one or more Apostolic Christian Church groups. Old Order Amish lived in Oregon until the 1960s.

The Mennonite churches have long been interested in their history and the Old Mennonites endorsed Sanford G. Shetler's **Church History of the Pacific Coast Mennonite Conference District**, published in 1932. In 1951 the Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church published a major portion of H.D. Burkholder's master's thesis in booklet form, **The Story of Our Conference and Churches**. In 1990, a history of all the Mennonite groups was published in **Apart and Together: Mennonites in Oregon and Neighboring States, 1876-1976** (Herald Press) by Hope Kauffman Lind.

Some Oregon Mennonites thought that more persons and congregations needed encouragement to work at church and family history on a continuing basis. In 1988 interested persons organized the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society and elected an executive committee. Its stated purpose was to record and preserve the history of

Mennonites and related groups in Oregon, for present and future generations.

This Society collects, preserves and organizes records, writings and artifacts of Oregon Mennonite groups, to aid historians and genealogists. In addition, the Society hopes to expand its educational programs to increase historical interest and involvement. Because of space limitations, at present the organization's plan to collect artifacts is largely not in effect. Rather, individuals and families are encouraged to hold such treasures until an adequate facility can preserve and display them.

Since its beginnings, the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society envisioned itself as being inter-Mennonite in focus and open to anyone who supports its purposes. Although membership is small, and heavy with Pacific Coast Conference people, it includes a variety of Mennonites. Members receive a semi-annual newsletter, which includes congregational and family histories presented at previous meetings.

In December, 1991, members elected a consulting board, to provide a broader range of perspectives and to promote interest and support of the Society. For several decades records of Pacific Coast Conference boards, committees and congregations had been collecting in a small vault at Western Mennonite High School (until the vault space was filled). When the school built a new chapel in 1991, a small room for an archives was included which is administered by the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society.

The Society also has a small but growing collection of other historical materials, largely books of family history or relating to Mennonite history and thought. Because of the limited space, the Society does not actively solicit archival materials from groups other than the Pacific Coast Conference but will gladly consider such materials when offered.


The new facility is named Oregon Mennonite Archives and Library and



Paul E. Yoder (1912-1987), Pacific Coast Conference historian who did much to preserve the church records. Photo: Flossie Lehman Yoder

is located at 9045 Wallace Road NW, Salem, OR 97304. Staffed by volunteers, the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society hopes it can be open for two part-days a week, at the beginning, with regular hours established as soon as possible, sometime in 1992. Volunteers are learning the process of working with archival materials as they accession the collections of materials that have been accumulating for decades. The Society had earlier processed many of its donated books, which will be available for use in the new facility.


Many Oregon Mennonites know of their theological, ethnic and family connections with Mennonites and Amish to the east. They have learned much from sister organizations, and now the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society makes it possible to share their heritage with others.

For more information contact one of the following officers: Hope K. Lind, president, 28773 Gimpl Hill Road; Eugene, OR 97402 503 344 5974; John L. Fretz, vice-president, 675 Elma Avenue SE, Salem, OR 97301 503 364 1669; Margaret Shetler, secretary, 5326 Briar Knob Loop NE, Scotts Mills, OR 97375 503 873 6406; Perry Schrock, treasurer, 30180 Sodaville-Mt. Home Road, Lebanon, OR 97355 503 258 6054; Marjorie Nofziger, librarian, 777 Bindshadler Street, Lebanon, OR 97355 503 451 4868. 

Hope Kauffman Lind is a member of the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church.



Archives of the Mennonite Church Register Beginning and End

Harold and Louise Thomas Cullar of North Lima, Ohio, with Marilyn Voran of the Archives of the Mennonite Church staff, hold the Archives register which the Cullars signed on the last page December 7, 1991. The register, begun in 1948, contains 5,096 entries. Harold Cullar had signed the register on November 26, 1948, and "Louise Thomas of Hollsopple, Pa.," had signed in January 14, 1949. The Cullars are assisting Jan Gleysteen on Anabaptist history study trips to Europe. 

News and Notes

Essex-Kent Mennonite Historical Association of Ontario is establishing a museum and archives in a housing complex now being developed by the Leamington Mennonite Home. About \$45,000 of the required \$80,000 cost has been donated or pledged.

Hildi Froese Tiessen has received a grant to study the Canadian Mennonite literary tradition and compile a bibliography of Canadian Mennonite writing. She is trying to track down the manuscript of a novel by Ephraim Weber. Weber mentions such a novel in correspondence with Lucy Maude Montgomery of *Anne of Green Gables* fame.

Carol and Howard Gimbel, members of the Erb Street Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ontario, have succeeded Edna and Paul Hunsberger as hosts of the historic Brubacher House in Waterloo, Ontario.

Edmund Pries of the University of

Waterloo and **Dorothy Yoder Nyce** of Goshen, Indiana, were selected for Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund awards. Pries received \$2,100 to continue research on "Oath Refusal and Radical Reformation Dissent" and Yoder Nyce received \$700 for editorial work on a book on global women.

Walter Klaassen of Vernon, British Columbia, will give the keynote address on a conference on "The Rule of Christ," a meeting in the Concept of the Believers Church series, May 20-23, 1992, at Goshen College. For more information contact Marlin Jeschke, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.

Mennonites in the Netherlands: From Martyr to Muppy (Mennonite Urban Professional People) is the theme of a course August 31 to September 4, 1992, initiated by the Amsterdam University Library and Mennonite Seminary in Amsterdam. Lecturers include **Mary Sprunger**, doctoral student at the University of Illinois, **Piet Visser**, curator at

Amsterdam University Library, and **Sjouke Voolstra**, dean of the Mennonite Seminary in Amsterdam. For information contact: Amsterdam Summer University, Box 53066, 1007 RB Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Telephone 31 20.6200225. Fax: 31 20.6249368.

Irvin B. Horst, who held the Menno Simons Chair of Mennonite History at the University of Amsterdam until his retirement in 1987, was honored on January 16 at Eastern Mennonite College. Horst had taught at the Virginia school from 1955 to 1967, and the Special Collections Room of the Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives at Eastern Mennonite College was named in his honor. The school also issued **Menno Simons: A Reappraisal** as a *Festschrift* in Horst's honor.

Horst currently works out of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

Paul M. Schrock, director of Herald

Press, has announced that the Scottdale Mennonite publisher will no longer publish **Die Ernsthafte Christenpflicht**, the Mennonite prayer book dating back to 1708. Herald Press had issued 20 printings of the publication since 1915, amounting to 55,000 copies. The prayer book is widely used among the Amish and will continue to be issued by Pathway Publishers of Alymer, Ontario. The Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church is securing a new English translation of the work for use among the Mennonites.

1992 John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest. Deadline for entries of papers from high school to post-graduate and seminary level is June 15, 1992. Send papers to **Levi Miller**, Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526.

In Ontario, **Leonard Friesen** of Conrad Grebel College is transcribing the diaries of Lewis J. Burkholder, a prominent Mennonite leader and author of **A Brief History of the Mennonites in Ontario** (1935). He hopes to eventually write a full-length

biography of Burkholder. **Lorna Bergey** of Kitchener, Ontario, is teaching an Elderhostel course on Ontario Mennonite history at Conrad Grebel College, August 9-15, 1992.

Correction. The July, 1991, **Bulletin**, page 7, caption under the Ministerial Certificate of John K. Yoder noted that the Amish Mennonite *Diener Versammlung* (ministers' meeting) was in Wayne County, Ohio, in 1864; the Wayne County, Ohio, meeting was in 1865, not in 1864. *L*

The Church Historian as Interpreter

A meeting of conference committees, historians and Mennonite heritage interpreters

Presenters

Jan Gleysteen, Scottdale, Pennsylvania
Tim Lichti, Shipshewana, Indiana
Carolyn S. Nolan, Harleysville, Pennsylvania
Theron Schlabach, Goshen, Indiana
Carolyn Wenger, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Lawrence Klippenstein, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Wilma McKee, Hydro, Oklahoma
John L. Ruth, Harleysville, Pennsylvania
Rachel Waltner Goossen, Goessel, Kansas

May 21-23, 1992
Goshen College
Goshen, Indiana

Sponsored by the Historical Committees of the General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite Church
To register: Russell Krabill, 26221 Vista Lane, Elkhart, IN 46517 219 522 6869

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Innocents Abroad? American Mennonite Travelers in Europe



By J. Robert Charles

"An innocent abroad, the American stands perennially transfixed, appalled and fascinated by the rich and sinful complexity of the continent from which his forebears fled," observes Eric Larrabee, alluding to Mark Twain's account of American tourists discovering "the world worth seeing" in Europe (and the Middle East) in the

late 1860s.¹ No less than their compatriots, American Mennonites have been warily fascinated by, what one Mennonite remembered, that "faraway place which he read about in his history book," that "nightmare of political and religious bigotry from which his forefathers had fortunately made their escape," as one Mennonite remembered his turn-of-the-century boyhood image of Europe.²

Both Amos Daniel (A.D.) Wenger and Sanford Calvin (S.C.) Yoder traveled through Europe on the way to India where this 1905 photo was taken: (front) Irvin E. Detwiler, Bertha Detwiler, Jacob Burkhardt; (middle) Lina Zook, Jacob (J.A.) Ressler, Esther Burkhardt, Mary Burkhardt; (back) Mahlon C. Lapp and Sarah Lapp. Photo: Archives of the Mennonite Church, J.A. and Lina Zook Ressler Collection

Not all that long ago, Europe represented for American Mennonites a war-prone continent of poverty and persecution forsaken for a new life in the New World. If the opening chapters of Anabaptist history had been written there, this produced detachment, not nostalgia—even if parting tears were often shed. For pre-steamship generations of Mennonite and Amish emigrants, Europe was the embarkation point for a westward ocean crossing usually concluded by “a great rejoicing that we once more saw land”—as an 1833 emigrant noted in his diary after a 75-day voyage during which the days of calm far outnumbered those of favorable winds.³ Once off the boat, the recent Swiss and German Mennonite immigrants, no more cosmopolitan in Pennsylvania than they had been in the Palatinate, would hardly have found either reason or means to recross the Atlantic to visit, at their leisure, the cities and sites of the Old World just abandoned!

Nor, for that matter, did many of their contemporaries. As Daniel Boorstin points out, through most of the nineteenth century, foreign travel for Americans was the privilege of an experienced and wealthy few.⁴ It was “uncomfortable, difficult, and expensive,” requiring “long planning, large expense, and great investments of time” and involving “risks to health or even to life.” Following the Civil War, however, improvements in transportation (railroads and ocean steamers) and the rise of middle-class prosperity extended the pleasures of traveling to the vacationing upper middle class. **The Innocents Abroad** bears humorous witness to the transition between the era of elite,



*Amos Daniel (A.D.) Wenger (1867-1935): his **Six Months in Bible Lands** became a Mennonite bestseller. Photo: Eastern Mennonite College, Menno Simons Historical Library*

well-to-do foreign travel and that of democratic mass tourism, which has developed even more dramatically in the age of jet travel and cruise ships.

Since the late nineteenth century, American Mennonites, traveling in either a personal or church-related capacity, have produced a surprising number of accounts of their direct encounters with the peoples, countries and cities of the continent their ancestors left behind.⁵ Although this body of writing presumably has not gone entirely unread, it seems to have gone largely unappreciated. Mennonites “have a sparse library of helpful travel material,” it was noted in the foreword to a recent volume designed to fill the gap for Western Europe—a reasonable judgment if

well-rounded guidebooks constitute the measure of what is useful.⁶ **The Mennonite Encyclopedia V** article on “tourism” focuses on Amish and Mennonite communities as the objects of others’ curiosity, not on the admittedly hard-to-assess extent and influence on Mennonites of our own tourist forays into the wider world.⁷

A recent decade of working and living in Europe generated for me a personal version of the multi-faceted American reaction to the Old World. Visits to Anabaptist and family sites of historical interest, to cathedrals, monasteries, war cemeteries and battlefields, as well as work and friendship with Mennonites from various countries, stimulated a curiosity to compare my observations and reactions with those of earlier Mennonite visitors.

Two Travelers

Two works, produced a half-century apart, stand out among those perused. The first is Amos Daniel (A.D.) Wenger’s **Six Months in Bible Lands and Around the World in Fourteen Months**, a 1902 publication based on his global circuit of 1899-1900. The second is Sanford Calvin (S.C.) Yoder’s **Eastward Toward the Sun**, an account of a 1949 trip through Europe to India.⁸ Neither man set off on his journey with the primary intention of visiting Europe, and only small portions of their respective works cover the European segments of their journeys. For both, as well as for the Mennonite authors of a 1912 work, visits to the Mennonite Mission in India figured large in their plans.⁹

A. D. Wenger, a Virginia native

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Microfilms of Volumes I-L of the Mennonite Historical Bulletin are available from: University Microfilms, Inc., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

who had spent a good part of his early adulthood in Missouri and Iowa, was a 31-year old minister and recent widower when he set off on his world tour in January 1899. "From childhood the desire had been strong to see the lands of the Old World, especially the lands of the Bible," he wrote in the preface to the book he subsequently sold door-to-door in eastern Pennsylvania and "right and left" at his evangelistic meetings in Lancaster County and Ontario. In this way, *Six Months in Bible Lands* would become "a bestseller in Mennonite homes," making Wenger, in the judgment of one of his contemporaries, "the only Mennonite to publish a book that paid for itself."¹⁰

An advocate of the formation of a Mennonite General Conference, Wenger had represented the Lancaster Conference ministers at the first meeting in Indiana just two months prior to his departure. (The Lancaster attitude toward the new body, he reported, was "generally speaking not very favorable.") In the late 1910s, he would become one of the eastern Mennonite leaders who saw in theological liberalism and modernism a mortal danger for the church. By the time he assumed, at age 55, the presidency of Eastern Mennonite College—a position he held from 1922 up to his death in 1935—Wenger had behind him "an unusually varied and vigorous life as a teacher, traveler, evangelist, pastor and churchman" with more self education than formal schooling.¹¹

Though he makes no mention of the fact in his book, prior to his departure Wenger may have been appointed by the Mennonite Evangelizing and Benevolent Board to the new mission in India, with the freedom to decide once there whether he would stay or not.¹² He would not stay on, but did visit J. A. Ressler and William B. and Alice Thut Page just six months after the trio's March, 1899, arrival in Dhamtri. He likely knew these people in that Ressler was also active in the General Conference formation, and the Thut Pages were from the Mennonite mission in Chicago where Wenger had assisted while attending Moody Bible Institute in 1894.

S. C. Yoder set off on his trip to India at age 70, in semi-retirement from three active decades of church leadership. As a member of a western Amish Mennonite group that had



Sanford Calvin (S.C.) Yoder "had the confidence and compassion of a man whose privilege it had been to live a full life before setting foot in Europe—where his home church was now engaged in extensive war relief efforts." Photo: Archives of the Mennonite Church, S.C. Yoder Collection

escaped the theological controversies swirling elsewhere in Mennonite circles, Yoder had exercised "a reconciling influence in the Mennonite Church during the troubled decades of the 1920s and the years following."¹³

His preparation for later responsibilities had included three years (1905-1908) with wife Emma and a young son on the range between the Saddle and Rattlesnake Mountains of Washington. Here, he wrote, "we spent a number of years gathering experience and growing up, and at the same time getting ready for what lay ahead." These years of total isolation from church life had been followed up by several more years of, among other things, coping with a dozen mules on a farm in Chappell, Nebraska. "If a person can outwit and outmaneuver a pack of unbroken, long-eared hybrids of various ages such as these were and maintain his composure," Yoder later quipped, "he ought to be able to peacefully settle all the difficulties his parishioners create—excepting cases in which mules are involved."¹⁴

A captivating storyteller, lover of poetry and literary craftsman, Yoder served as Mission Board secretary from 1921 to 1940, and then as president for the next four years. But perhaps his greatest leadership challenge and accomplishment during this period had come in neighboring

Goshen. Although "snide remarks" were made in the community about "the farmer from Iowa who had come to run the college," Yoder became president of the reopened Goshen College in 1924 and served until 1940. "Always a tall man in the saddle," he "towered above many of us not only physically but also in other noteworthy ways."¹⁵ In 1943, Herald Press had published his *Down South America Way*, growing out of a 1940 trip made on behalf of the Mission Board, and several other volumes would come from his pen in the 1950s. My own boyhood memories of Yoder, a neighbor of my family in the 1960s, are of an erect, dignified, deliberate and kindly white-haired man—who had been a real cowboy!

Amos Daniel Wenger

Almost six months to the day after the death of his wife Mary Hostetler, to whom he had been married for barely more than a year, A. D. Wenger left his home in Millersville, Pennsylvania. Did he set off to ease the pain of the loss of his beloved, or to test a possible vocation for overseas missions? In any case, he would return from his personally-arranged global tour on March 10, 1900—thus confounding the prediction of a local postmaster that he would never get back. "Divine guidance so shaped events that this tour became a possibility," Wenger wrote. The material means to finance his 40,000-mile journey had come in the form of the inheritance of his late wife, the only child of a farmer.¹⁶

Wenger sailed from New York on the "Servia," bound for Liverpool. "By the fifth day some of us were very sick and sore and weak from being rolled and tossed and from vomiting and trying to vomit," he confessed. "I hardly expected to live to see England, and almost made up my mind that if I did I would not sail much farther" (*Six Months*, p. 4).

Once back on terra firma, however, he was ready "to plunge alone into the Old World of history and long renown, so different in many respects from the New" (p. 9). Wenger spent four months visiting England, France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Greece. "Our country is young and we have nothing that is old and historic," he



Paris postcard in 1900. Wenger wrote: "The number of 'righteous' is perhaps more than were in the Sodom that was destroyed." Print: Jan Gleysteen Collection

noted. "In the old countries things are old, indeed, and have legends connected with them that have been handed down for many centuries. Weird ghosts, uncouth beings and phantoms that walk in darkness appear to haunt every church, castle, tower, fort and prison, and saunter along the shady brinks of historic rivers and hold councils in dark ravines and bloody revels at night on battlefields" (pp. 72-73).

A discouraging encounter in Liverpool with an American "church member" who "talked more of theatres than of divine services" and a rainy week in London left Wenger cold and unimpressed. The exception was a visit to the Spurgeon Tabernacle and attending "some excellent Bible lectures" by Chicagoan W. W. White. The Church of England services he attended "were of a cold and formal style, much letter and little spirit." In St. Paul's Cathedral "I heard little of the gospel of Christ and much of the rules of the Church of England." Wenger concluded that "London is a very wicked city" and wondered "if the number that go from London to heaven is not exceedingly small."

He was ready to move on: "Let us leave for France. There are better places than London, with its awful vice and crime, bringing misery and wretchedness untold, with its constant din of traffic and crowded humanity,

with its arrogant pomp and sin-wrought poverty, with its foul odors and dense fogs!" (pp. 9, 16-19).

The Channel crossing proved no more pleasant, however, as again seasickness produced "such retching and agony as I hope the reader may never experience." No less commendable proved to be the Paris of the Belle-Epoque, whose 30,000 cafés had created the highest per-capita alcohol consumption in the world. In 1895, Edmond de Goncourt had confessed to his journal that "this is an age which has a liking for unsavory conduct," and Wenger had no reason to dissent—even though his criteria may not have been the same.¹⁷ Wenger compared the French capital to "a sepulchre, outwardly polished beautifully white, but within is full of dead men's bones and the vilest corruption. It seemed a shocking sight, the first evening in the city, to witness hundreds of men and women seated promiscuously at tables under awnings on the sidewalks, just outside of the large saloons jabbering their French and having a jovial time drinking together. Hundreds of life-size nude human figures cut out of white marble abound in public places." Yet "I will say this for Paris though: I did see a book store kept by Americans, closed on Sunday. And, the number of 'righteous' is perhaps more than were in the Sodom that was

destroyed" (pp. 21, 23-26).

Less inclined than Twain to see in billiard tables the sign of civilization, in Antwerp Wenger was distressed by the words "Conscience" and "Billiards" on the outside of one establishment. "What deadness and corruption were on the inside I do not know, but the outside suggested the inconsistent lives of some people, even Christian professors," he deplored. Doubtless unaware that the establishment carried the name of one of the great figures of nineteenth-century Flemish literary romanticism, Hendrik Conscience, Wenger continued: "they have fought conscience and seared it with a hot iron until it is dead and around about its carcass are written, billiards, cards, brothels, dances, saloons, theatres, lying, profanity, vulgarity and fraudulency" (pp. 70-71).

In his introduction to *Six Months*, Daniel Kauffman (who had ordained Wenger) remarked that "this volume abounds in well-timed morals which are closely interwoven in the narrative, and which cannot fail to impress every thoughtful reader" (vii). Wenger's comments on conditions and behavior in the great cities of Europe typified the evangelical Protestant progressivism of the late 1800s that influenced the promoters of home and foreign missions among American Mennonites. They must be read, therefore, as reactions to cities per se, "modern Ninevahs" whose badness was being turned into a challenge for advocates of home missions in America.¹⁸

Also, perhaps due to Wenger not having traveling companions with whom to relax and occasionally laugh, the European portions of *Six Months* give a hint of being "at war with savages and idiots," as the American satirist Ambrose Bierce once defined "abroad."¹⁹ Readers with a lower tolerance for moralizing and a greater appreciation of the "cultural elegance," "human potential," and "sorry decadence"²⁰ of urban civilization, may find Wenger's reactions to European cities entertaining, an intent hardly in Wenger's mind as he penned them.

Wenger's trip came when North American Mennonites had no formal ties and very little contact of any kind with Mennonites in other parts of the world. What were Wenger's observations of European Mennonites, of whom he met more than forty

ministers? Scattered in different parts of Europe, the 60,000²¹ Mennonites knew little of each other and "exist almost as different denominations, with the exception that all labor together in support of foreign missions." Although he found baptism by pouring to be widely practiced, "there are only a few thousand that observe the ordinances of feet-washing, the devotional head-covering and the kiss of charity." "Nearly all traces of 'modest apparel,' or plain garb, have disappeared."

Wenger was distressed to see Mennonites in Germany, Holland and Switzerland performing military service and "slowly but surely . . . losing their grip on the nonresistant principles of the gospel of peace." He was shocked to encounter uniformed sons in a number of Mennonite homes.²²

Wenger found the several hundred Amish Mennonites in Alsace "to be just as near the Mennonites in America in faith and practice as any in all Europe" (p. 75). But he was clearly taken aback by his encounters with the Dutch Mennonites, "the most liberal and worldly of all Mennonites." He refused a cigar from Amsterdam Professor S. Cramer, who "lit up his long-stemmed pipe" as they began a

talk lasting several hours. Wenger reported that Cramer thought Mennonites in America to be heretics and that Dutch Mennonites were Unitarians. "Now, readers, I do not mean to dodge the truth and give you the impression that these twenty-five thousand Mennonites in Holland . . . are faithful and zealous in the cause of Christ and are one with us in keeping the self-denying principle of God's Word. We would be glad if they were still possessed of the piety and principles of their ancestral brethren a few centuries ago, but they are not and such a cold, spiritless faith I never before witnessed among Mennonites."

According to Wenger, "the other Mennonites of Europe have but little to do with these of such liberal views, except that they cooperate with them in foreign missionary work. They are so worldly that the most world-compromising Mennonites in America would not fellowship with them" (64-66).²³

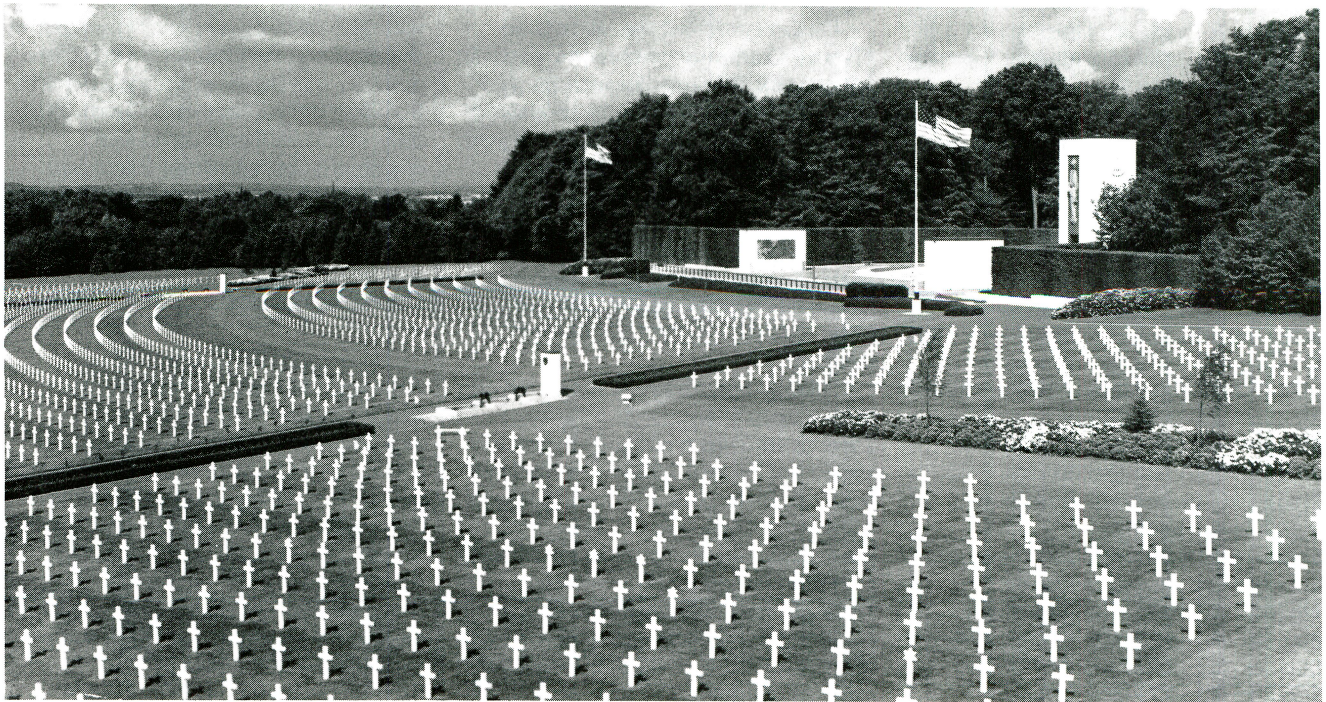
"Why have [Mennonites] of Europe become guilty of gross deviations, and division into factions?" Wenger was the first of a long line of American Mennonite leaders, stretching down to present day, to find, with the conceit peculiar to our civilization, that their European brothers and sisters "have

been poorly organized."

In Wenger's opinion, "with the binding influences of a thorough organization they might have remained true to the humble teachings of Jesus, and thus be a great power for good to the world." He saw a moral and an encouragement for the movement at home: "A general conference established in time would undoubtedly have aided materially. Is it too late to profit by their mistakes? We rejoice that steps are being taken for better organization among us in America" (pp. 81-82).

Sanford Calvin Yoder

Wenger's journey through Europe towards India had come at the very beginning of American Mennonite mission activity in the jewel in Britain's imperial crown. S. C. Yoder set off to represent the Elkhart board at the 1949 golden jubilee of the founding of Mennonite mission in the now-independent India.²⁴ In introducing his book, Yoder stated, "It is not my purpose to even pretend to be a historian, an economist, a political scientist, or a dispenser of counsel or cures for the ailments of the lands I visited. I am," he declaimed, "simply



American soldiers' graves in Luxembourg. Yoder wrote: "The simple, lovely markers line on line, the flowers that bloom over their graves, the inscriptions, however eloquent or touching, mean nothing to them now." Photo: Jan Gleysteen Collection

a traveler who has followed the roads across the world and have jotted down such of my experiences, observations, bits of history, and 'what-not' as have caught my fancy, engaged my interest, or stirred my curiosity as I mingled with the people in their villages, cities, and towns or met them in their homes, or along the highway and streets" (*Eastward*, vii).

Yoder sailed from New York to England in late July 1949, and then from Venice for Bombay at the end of September. In the intervening two months, he visited England, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland and Italy. Yoder's Europe was not the cornucopia of evil cities, intemperance, bewildering legends, history, popery, and liberal Mennonites that it was for the relatively-youthful, defensive and saddened Wenger when he visited a half-century earlier. Yoder seemed to move easily and attentively among both splendor and ruins. He had the confidence and compassion of a man whose privilege it had been to live a full life before setting foot in Europe—where his home church was now engaged in extensive war relief efforts. "This was my first glance of what is spoken of as the Old World," he wrote in 1959. "I found it impressive!" Basel was his base during these two months, but little time was spent there because "Europe is much too alluring and full of interest to allow a traveler to remain long at one place."²⁵

London struck Yoder as "this greatest of all cities on the globe" with its "great buildings—cathedrals, government houses, banking institutions, market places, schools and universities, bookstalls." Yet "great and marvelous and wonderful as London is one looks in vain for the glory and splendor of the celestial city which John the Apostle describes in the Book of Revelation." Yoder heard Methodist Donald Soper, "an ardent Biblicist and advocate of Christian nonresistance," preach to crowds in Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon. Yoder wondered, given "all the unoccupied pews in the churches of London and around the world," whether "perhaps the traditional manner of presenting the Gospel will have to give place to or at least be supplemented by other ways and means more primitive and less conventional if the masses are to hear the Good News." Above all, England was



S.C. Yoder visited the marker of Menno Simons in Wüstenfeld (Schleswig-Holstein). Photo: Archives of the Mennonite Church, S.C. Yoder Collection

the land of poets: lines from Pope and Gray are quoted, and Yoder bids farewell to the "Mother of Chaucer, and Shakespeare, of Pope and Shelley, Keats and Browning and Wordsworth" (pp. 11, 16, 22-23).

On the continent the Mennonite Central Committee centers for postwar relief work "became home to me and the relief workers were my counselors and guides and made my stay pleasant and worth while" (viii). Visiting American soldiers' graves in Luxembourg, Yoder wrote with the compassionate insight of one who as a young man of 20 had been ready to volunteer for the Spanish-American War, only to be talked out of it by his mother.²⁶

"One comes away from such scenes with a deep feeling of depression. . . . Here behind the whitened crosses or under the Stars of Bethlehem lie those who once were full of life and hope as all young people are. . . . The simple, lovely markers line on line, the flowers that bloom over their graves, the inscriptions, however eloquent or touching, mean nothing to them now. They are dead and all their longings and aspirations are at an end. . . . May we hope that the day will ever come when men will have grown big and wise and honest enough to lay aside

all selfishness and littleness, and avarice, and jealousy and seek to justly and equitably settle the problems of nations as they settle their own?"

He later remarked: "When I saw day by day the devastation that marked the path of Patton's army across Luxembourg and Germany and that of the Allies on every front, I was profoundly thankful that it had not happened to us but I could not help wondering whether we were worthy of being spared the hardships and losses that had been imposed upon others" (pp. 31-32, 102).

Yoder attended the All European Conference of Mennonites, who had come together in Basel for the first time since the war. "These were days of blessed fellowship together," he later wrote. A visit to eastern France brought back memories of a hired man "who entertained us children with songs of his beloved Strasbourg and the hills of Alsace." When he visited "the homelands of my fathers," he could understand why "my great-grandmother wept when they drove her away from their home in the beautiful Rhine Valley to board the ship that would take her to lands afar."²⁷

Yoder attended Sunday worship at the Singel Doopsgezinde Church in Amsterdam which he found "not only interesting but edifying... The sermon was delivered by a woman ordained to the ministry. As I think of it now, her address was the most finished piece of pulpit oratory I have ever heard. Not only was it well composed and excellently delivered but its content was Biblical and its exposition sound" (pp. 39, 85).

Conclusion


Looking back from the 1990s, American Mennonite exposure to Europe since World War I, and especially since 1950, has come through a wide variety of experiences: research and scholarship leading to "the recovery of the Anabaptist vision"; relief work, augmented by mission work after World War II; heritage-relevant group tourism such as TourMagination; individual travel through Mennonite-Your-Way directories; study terms and choir tours of our church colleges; and Mennonite world conferences, most recently the 1984 assembly in



Close up of Menno Simons bas-relief at Wüstenfeld, Germany. This plaque was stolen in the early fifties and likely sold for scrap metal. This photo was taken by Herman Schultz, a young photography student in Hamburg, and given to Reynold Sawatsky during his Mennonite Central Committee relief work in northern Germany. The dates of Menno Simons are generally considered to be 1496-1561. Photo: Archives of the Mennonite Church, Reynold Sawatsky Collection

Strasbourg—to name but a few.

In short, American Mennonite experience in and exposure to Europe has ceased to be the reserve of a fortunate few which it was during the half-century bounded by the respective trips of A. D. Wenger and S. C. Yoder.

Although one can only welcome the increased American Mennonite access to, and hopefully understanding of, Europe and European Mennonites, it has meant the demise of personal travel works such as *Six Months and Eastward Toward the Sun*. In ways that transcend both today's slide show or videotape, these literary accounts reveal not only two Mennonite leaders at two different points in their respective life journeys, but also North American and European Mennonites prior to, and in the wake of, two terrible conflicts which dramatically changed our conditions, outlooks and mutual contacts. To the extent that A. D. Wenger and S. C. Yoder represent different facets of our past and present identity—cultural, theological, and psychological—their books still provide prisms for refracting American Mennonite encounters with Europe into the entire spectrum of our fascination with "the rich and sinful complexity of the continent" our forebears left behind. 

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¹Eric Larrabee, "Elements of a Transatlantic Dialogue," in *A New Europe?* ed. Stephen R. Graubard (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 527; Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad, or the New Pilgrims Progress* (New York: New American Library, 1966 [1869]).

²Samuel A. Yoder, *Middle-East Sojourn* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1951), 1.

³Daniel P. Guengerich, *An Account of the Voyage from Germany to America* (Kalona, Ia.: Jacob F. Swartzendruber, ca. 1932), 28.

⁴Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1971), 80-86.

⁵I am grateful to Joseph Springer and Barbara Smucker for bringing to my attention more than fifty travel

accounts and guides produced by Mennonites and Amish among the holdings of the Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen, Indiana. Not all of these concern Europe, however.

⁶Paul Kraybill, "Foreword," in Jan Gleysteen, *Mennonite Tourguide to Western Europe* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1984), 11.

⁷Donald B. Kraybill, "Tourism," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, eds. Cornelius J. Dyck and Dennis D. Martin (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1990), 888-89.

⁸A. D. Wenger, *Six Months In Bible Lands and Around the World in Fourteen Months* (Doylestown, Pa.: Joseph B. Steiner, 1902); S. C. Yoder, *Eastward Toward the Sun* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1953).

⁹In 1909, J. S. Hartzler and J. S. Shoemaker were chosen by Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, and endorsed by Mennonite General Conference, to visit the India missionaries, who had requested the visit to increase the home church's confidence and interest in their work. During their June, 1910, to May, 1911, trip, Hartzler and Shoemaker attended the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh and traveled through Europe. See J. S. Hartzler and J. S. Shoemaker, *Among Missions in the Orient and Observations By the Way* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1912).

¹⁰Wenger, *Six Months*, iii; Hubert R. Pellman, *Eastern Mennonite College, 1917-1967* (Harrisonburg, Va.: Eastern Mennonite College, 1967), 84; Chester L. Wenger (son of A. D. Wenger), phone interview with author, April 19, 1992, Bareville, Pennsylvania.

¹¹*Proceedings of the Mennonite General Conference: Including Discussions Leading to Its Orgination* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1921), 48-49; Pellman, b, 83; Mary Wenger Martin Kratz (daughter of A. D. Wenger), "A. D. Wenger," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4 (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1959), 917.

¹²See John A. Lapp, *The Mennonite Church in India* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1972), 40.

¹³Theron Schlabach, *Gospel Versus Gospel: Mission and the Mennonite Church, 1863-1944* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1980), 114; Willard H. Smith, "Sanford Calvin Yoder," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, 951.

¹⁴Sanford Calvin Yoder, *The Days*

of My Years (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1959), 62, 66. *Horse Trails Along the Desert* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1954).

¹⁵Guy F. Hershberger, Glen R. Miller, and Melvin Gingerich, in *An Evening to Honor Sanford Calvin Yoder*, ed. J. Lawrence Burkholder (Goshen, Ind.: Goshen College, 1974), 31, 47, 1.

¹⁶Chester L. Wenger, interview with author.

¹⁷See Stanley Meisler, "Long Live Paris, with Her Pleasures and Complexities," *Smithsonian* 22, no. 5 (August 1991): 43-44.

¹⁸Menno Simons (M.S.) Steiner and other advocates of the Chicago Mission, where Wenger assisted in 1894, made such arguments in the 1890s in Schlabach, *Gospel Versus Gospel*, 56-68.

¹⁹Ambrose Bierce, *The Enlarged Devil's Dictionary*, ed. E. J. Hopkins (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), 38.

²⁰J. Lorne Peachey, "I'm Not Going to the Zoo," *Gospel Herald* 85, no. 5 (February 4, 1992): 16.

²¹Wenger counted the numbers in this way: 25,000 in the Netherlands, 7,000 in East and West Prussia, 21,000 in south Russia, 1,000 in Switzerland, a "few thousand" in southern Germany, 591 in France, 450 in northern Austria, and 510 in Russian Poland (p. 34).

²²According to Chester L. Wenger, interview with author.

²³For later Dutch Mennonite opinions on the potential for fruitful contacts with American Mennonites in light of the theological gulf between the two groups, see Gerlof D. Homan, "Early Twentieth-Century Dutch-American Mennonite Contacts," *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* 53, no. 2 (April, 1992): 6-10.

²⁴Paul Erb, then editor of the *Gospel Herald*, was also a fraternal delegate, but he flew to the jubilee celebration (Yoder, *The Days of My Years*, 174).

²⁵Yoder, *The Days of My Years*, 174-75.

²⁶LaVerne Yoder Hostetler (daughter of S. C. Yoder), interview with author, December 29, 1989, Goshen, Indiana.

²⁷Yoder, *The Days of My Years*, 175.

The Swiss Brethren and the Dutch Mennonites: How Large a Contrast?

By Irvin B. Horst

The article "The Swiss Brethren and the Dutch Mennonites: A Particular Study in Contrasts," in the January issue of *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* (Leonard Gross, 1992, p. 1) deserves a note of commendation, although the exaggeration is pardonable. It is a question I have wrestled with for many years, for it has been somewhat of an anomaly that Ava and I as Mennonites from the Swiss Brethren tradition served for many years among the Dutch Mennonites. It is easy for me to identify with much of what was said. Permit me to make a few observations.

1. Dordrecht Confession editions: The German translation was published at least in 1664, 1686, 1691, 1711, 1742 and many times in Germany through the 19th century, to mention only the separate editions. Even the Basel 1822 edition was not the *Güldene Aepffel* version. Also, the many German editions in Pennsylvania and elsewhere did not fall back on the *Güldene Aepffel* for an "improved" version. Therefore, the Dordrecht has come down to us (primarily as a confession among Mennonites and Amish) in the original version.

2. As the title implies, the *Güldene Aepffel* was a devotional book rather than a work of an official nature. In the Ephrata 1745 edition, it also retained this nature, as witness the prelims and its use beyond Mennonite and Amish circles. Friedmann repeatedly considers it as such; the second part with its more contemporary materials, he believed, reflected some Pietist influence. In view of the Pietist books Swiss Brethren brought with them to Colonial America, and in the light of the later history of the Reist group, this seems plausible.

3. Why did *Güldene Aepffel* not include the Schleithem Articles? I believe we have profited much from the revival of interest in the Schleithem Articles, and I would not want to detract from this interest. There are Dutch editions of 1560 and 1565, as well as text editions for

scholars, but for more than four centuries they did not function in the life of the church, neither in Europe nor in North America. I think it is time for us to point out that the Schleithem Articles were not a confession of faith. They were not so intended. If they were so meant, they would have pronounced on central doctrines of the Christian faith such as the most central of all, our belief in Jesus Christ. Schleithem was not the only *Brüderlich Vereinigung* among the Anabaptists of the time. The Schleithem Articles are distinctive articles related to specific contemporary needs, a re-markable document for our understanding of the Anabaptist view of the church.

4. Were the Swiss Brethren congregational in church government? Early Swiss and Amish history (16th and 17th centuries) indicates that decisions were not made on a congregational basis. We inherited the Swiss practices in Pennsylvania where if anywhere in the Mennonite church the "episcopal" order prevailed. I think Menno Simons functioned in a similar pattern. The expulsion of Adam Pastor, which is mentioned in the article (page 3), was performed by the elders (oudsten), Menno and Dirk Philips taking the lead. These elders were in authority similar to our bishops in Pennsylvania. Menno's expulsion of the Swiss and South Germans near the end of his life was a misuse of his authority and was an exception (generally considered a fault of old age).

I am thankful for the article and would welcome rejoinders.

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A Response by Leonard Gross

The important questions Irvin Horst raises, in his usual gracious manner, merit a careful response—a response, longer than can fit into

several columns of on these pages.

What follows, consequently, is a much shorter version of what I actually did send to Horst.

To point one: True, the Dordrecht Confession has been reprinted, in its original form, in almost every generation since its creation in 1632. It remains, however, a Dutch Mennonite confession in its origins, whereas the Schleithem Confession, by way of contrast, has Swiss Anabaptist origins. (My extended typology has the following North American Mennonites having held mainly to Dordrecht: Lancaster Conference; to some degree the General Conference Mennonite Church; Mennonite General Conference, 1898-1944; and the Old Order Amish. Others which have mainly held to Schleithem existentially, as an unwritten charter, are Franconia Conference, except for an "episcopal interlude" from 1920 to 65; the Amish-Mennonites after 1862; the Mennonite Church before 1898 and following 1944.) It remains that in 1702 some Swiss were not satisfied with the Dordrecht Confession and, in the process of reworking it, attempted to make it "Swiss Brethren" in substance and spirit.

To point two: *Golden Apples* is in reality over 91 percent epistolary and doctrinal, and less than 9 percent devotional, in nature. To speak as Horst does about "a work of an official nature," stands anti-thetically to Swiss Brethren congregationalism. The Schleithem Confession comes the closest to representing something official in nature for the Swiss. Also, the Swiss were not as interested in dogmatics and confessions of faith as were Menno and Dirk and those who continued in their structured approach to faith and life. Only when the Dordrecht Confession was accepted by some Swiss Brethren (especially the Alsace contingent), and when Jakob Ammann and others in agreement with him began insisting on foot washing and a strict adherence to excommunication and shunning, did the other Swiss Brethren begin to ask, what, exactly, were they "buying

into," by accepting this Dutch confession. And here my contention is that a Swiss Brethren author read the confession critically, and decided that, to make it traditionally Swiss Brethren, it needed a certain complementation—hence, his additions.

To point three: I have been gathering notes on this very question, of why, in contrast to the some dozen versions and editions of the Schleithem Confession produced up to 1686 which we know of today (and, by the way, I do hold it to be a true "Swiss Brethren" confession), that seemingly there was less interest in reprinting the Confession after that point. **Golden Apples** probably did not include it because the first two-thirds of the volume was, in effect, a martyr book, and although Sattler probably wrote the first draft of the Schleithem Confession, it is still the composite work of a group, hence, not fitting this part of the **Golden Apples** mold. Furthermore, the (1686?) reprint of the Confession probably was still available for purchase in 1702. And since the **Golden Apples** emphasis in the doctrinal section was on the nature of the Dordrecht Confession, and on where the Swiss Brethren saw reason to complement it, it would have been confusing to add yet another element, that of Schleithem (which, we may assume, the Swiss Brethren were united on, and which, therefore, needed no further elaboration). But further research is needed to answer this question more adequately.

To point four: I would be interested in Horst's interpretation of N. van der Zijpp's view that Dirk and Menno, already in 1547, "assumed the authority to ban, which properly belonged to the brotherhood." However this approach to leadership and authority fits into the Dutch scene, it is, to be sure, foreign to the Swiss Brethren, congregational approach to mutuality (a discipleship, fulfilled in a community attuned to the Gospel of Peace, with a leadership, serving to help effect such interaction).

Far more work remains in ferreting out these issues, also, in the light of the coming Amish Tricentennial (1693-1993). I hope Horst, and others, will continue to give due consideration to these important matters, which at the same time have a direct bearing on the questions of inter-Mennonite cooperation, and possible merger. *W*

The Modern Mennonite Mosaic: Many Pieces But Little Picture

By Calvin W. Redekop

Mennonite Mosaic: Identity and Modernization. J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger. Scottdale: Herald Press. 1991. Pp. 308. \$15.95.

Most of us assume that significant change has begun only recently and that it will endanger our lives and very existence (often referred to as a "foreshortened view of history"). This view has infected even our old order cousins, who unfortunately are not included in this book.

Precisely, these groups might offer a broader insight as to who the Mennonites are. Gideon L. Fisher in **Farm Life and its Changes** (Pequea Publishers, 1978) states: "Because methods in family farm operations have made tremendous changes in the last century[!], we feel it to be beneficial for our younger generation if they know more about the history of our rural people of years past." How important is change to the Mennonite experience?

The idea of change has bothered the Mennonites for centuries, for the sectarian world view rejects an open-ended dialogue with the world and change. Or is the sectarian identity no longer relevant? **Mennonite Mosaic** sets about to "gain clues about the impact of modernization on members of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches." What happens to religious identity when church members become urbanized, achieve more formal schooling and income, and enter extensive involvement in the networks of industry, commerce and the professions?

The authors obtained answers to these questions by asking 3,500 randomly selected persons in five Mennonite groups (BIC, EMC, GC, MB, and MC) a battery of scientifically constructed questions. Two thirds of these questions had been asked in a similar survey in 1972 and reported in **Anabaptists Four Centuries Later**.

The present study reports on the changes that have taken place in the

17-year interim, and expands the research to include topics not included in the original study. In the portion of questions repeated from the 1972 study, the research provides an engrossing mass of information on changes that have or have not occurred.

There are factors that have changed: educational level, occupational diversification, urbanization, personal morality, roles for women and decline of patriarchal authority, political participation and pacifism. Other factors have changed very little: religious beliefs, religious experience, church participation and Anabaptism, scores on Anabaptism, fundamentalism and orthodoxy.

The specific information regarding elements of Mennonite faith and life will be useful and timely for educators, church administrators, academics and researchers, as well as for the general membership. Trying to understand the significance of, and reasons for, the changes and non-changes should provide practitioners and theoreticians with real challenges for a long time to come.

About one third of the topics, raised for the first time, included "concomitants of modernization" such as individualism, personal autonomy, and materialism. These scales provide some interesting information on how Mennonites stand on the issues. New questions regarding attitudes toward gender roles present helpful information on this increasingly important issue. New in-group identification measures also provide useful insights on the "cohesion" of Mennonite society. This book presents one profile of one sector of Mennonitism. I say "one profile," for it is axiomatic that researchers find what they are looking for.

Other profiles could have been constructed, and this raises the analytic dimensions with their stimulating questions.

1) Almost all the indices measure personal attitudes or beliefs, neglecting structural and relations ones such as measures of in-group and out-group marriage; in-group and out-group friendship patterns; rates of

congregational membership change; defection and new converts; neighborhood residence patterns; number of automobiles owned; cross-generational social and economic mobility; and leadership-laity relations. Because Mennonite society is communal, as the authors correctly aver, these parameters cannot be ignored.

2) The methodology used raises many questions. The definition and use of modernization and modernity is quite arbitrary and undeveloped. The authors state: "We have plotted five dimensions of modernization—urbanization, rationalization, specialization, stratification, and mobility—which we think will have effected considerable change among the five denominations of our 1989 sample" (34). Nonetheless, no explanation is provided why these dimensions have been selected and how they will have special relevance to Mennonites.

Although no reference is made, it appears Don Kraybill's "Modernity and Identity: The Transformation of Mennonite Identity" (Redekop and Steiner, 1988, 153-172), is the model which Kauffman and Driedger have adopted for their framework. They might have used Kraybill's analysis more carefully, for it includes a more nuanced understanding of "modernity," and he limits its utility to "ethnicity."

What is more disconcerting is that the modernization indices seem to have little ability to explain changes in Mennonite beliefs and attitudes. In numerous sections are conclusions such as: "Insofar as Anabaptism is concerned, modernization has not weakened the religious pole supporting the Mennonites' sacred Canopy" (85); or "Urban Mennonites scored no higher than rural Mennonites on scales measuring secularism, individualism, personal independence, and materialism" (101); or "As measured by our concomitants of modernization, rural and urban respondents showed no significant differences, we conclude that the urbanization process among Mennonites leads to diminished orthodoxy of beliefs, diminished support for traditional moral standards..."

These contradictory propositions present either an editing or a conceptual problem. By the tenth



J. Howard Kauffman, co-author of *Mennonite Mosaic* (1991) and *Anabaptists Four Centuries Later* (1975). Photo: John D. Yoder

chapter, the reader gets a bit nervous, unless one is rescued by a proposition introduced on page 43 to clarify these contradictions. There is indeed secularization and loss of identity, but it has been counteracted by sacralization and recovery of identity (218ff). Nice work! Except the evidence for this dialectic process is not provided.

3) The argument is problematic and unclear on the broader conceptual understanding of the Mennonite movement or society and what the documented changes mean. After a second reading, I became even more confused by the many indices and various measures that have been utilized as part of the theoretical scheme. No logical or intuitive picture emerges of how the various measures explain the Mennonite phenomenon.

The dimensions of modernization (mentioned above) via their indicators (percentages urban, educational level, occupation, income and residence moves) are to produce the concomitants of modernization (secularism, individualism, and materialism). These then are correlated with the dimensions of Mennonite identity (religion, community, family, institutions and culture) whose indicators are beliefs and behavior, friends and reciprocity, cohesion and roles, schools and organizations, language and endogamy respectively, which are finally compared and correlated with the measure of Anabaptism, orthodoxy, and

fundamentalism. I am afraid readers get lost in the dense jungle of intercorrelations and cross-tabulations of measures based on a modernization index, which, alas, do not prove significant.

Some experts suggest modernization theory is based on "a kind of explicit and self-conscious commitment to the modern in intellectual and cultural spheres" (Wilson, 19, *Encyclopedia of Religion*). Wilson further suggests that modernization is "a special category of social and cultural change" (19). Any "modernization" index may be a self-limiting variable obscuring the larger picture of structure and change. For example, urbanization can only go to 100 percent; then what happens to modernization as a concept? Specific changes, always understood as modernization in every period, may not affect the real issues. (A 17-year span to measure change is an awfully "modern" and foreshortened concept.)

The term mosaic may well describe the Mennonites, but it may also describe the conceptual framework of the book. Do any number of pieces when put together naturally form a picture or does a mosaic not need to be a picture? *Mennonite Mosaic* presents a rather sophisticated and complex research method and technique providing lots of good pieces, but these pieces need a cohesive theory appropriate to define the unique Anabaptist-Mennonite history.

The authors seem to be looking for clues, for example, in the last pages of the book (258) when the idea of leadership-laity relations is belatedly introduced. It might have been better to study the attitudes and actual structures of laity and leadership in the Mennonite society rather than the many indices of beliefs derived from sociologists using the larger "modernizing" community as the base. Even if Harold Bender's three motifs may not have been the right ones, I suspect that some central set of Anabaptist-Mennonite motifs would provide a better set of concepts upon which to project the mosaic.

Kauffman and Driedger have given us lots of good material to help get images on some aspects of the status of, and changes in, the Mennonite movement. But they also stimulate us to search for a more convincing framework than modernization to understand what relevance change has

for faith. Is it maybe time to study how a vision is related to reality and how it can affect change? *U*

Calvin W. Redekop of Harrisonburg, Virginia, is the author of *Mennonite Society* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

Book Reviews

Baptism, Peace and the State in the Reformed and Mennonite Traditions. Edited by Ross T. Bender and Alan P.F. Sell. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1991. Pp. 248. \$35.

Originally presented at an October, 1989, consultation at the University of Calgary, six papers in this collection are apologetic in a double sense: they regretfully acknowledge past errors and judgments, and also offer a reasoned justification for their tradition's present practices and convictions. The papers are part of the ongoing dialogue, begun in Strasbourg in July, 1984, between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (Presbyterian and Congregational) and the Mennonite World Conference.

As one participant said, "The old days of mutual vilification are, fortunately, largely over" but "there is still room for brotherly and sisterly correction." (One cannot help observing, however, that the "sisterly" voice is still missing from this text, which boasts no women writers.)

The essays range in breadth from Max Stackhouse's "Peace in Church, Family, and State: A Reformed View," which touches on all three issues (baptism, peace and church-state relations) between the Reformed and Mennonite communions; to Iain Nicol's narrowly focused exegesis of Calvin in "Church and State in the Calvinist Reformed Tradition." The latter article is intentionally limited in its scope—so limited that it seems to offer less to the dialogue than do the other essays, which cover, to a greater extent, both Reformation views and contemporary manifestations and alterations of those views.

Writing for Mennonites, Marlin Miller offers a concise and nuanced

exposition of "the best" of baptism in the Mennonite tradition, and Howard John Loewen admirably examines "how the language of peace functions in a minority tradition currently in transition." Harry Loewen's church-state essay speaks clearly about the 200-year-old Mennonite traditions of both withdrawal and noninvolvement (Schleitheim) and selective participation in matters of government. Loewen notes that contemporary Mennonites are still more skeptical about their ability to "transform the world" through political processes than Reformed persons have been. Nonetheless they also recognize that they must "become involved with suffering humanity around them and bring about needful changes in society through the most effective means possible."

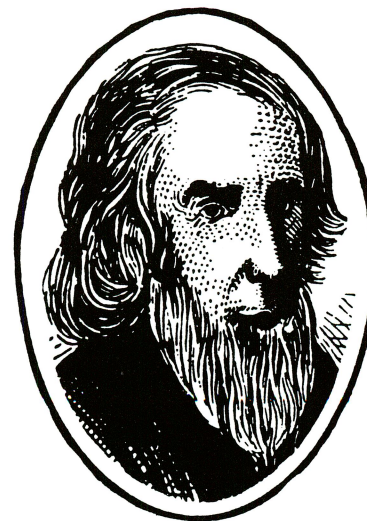
In addition to the meaty papers, the text includes Alan P. F. Sell's helpful introduction and pointed responses by a philosopher of religion, a sociologist, a systematic theologian and a church historian. The participants' findings, including challenges to both Reformed and Mennonite denominations, cap the discussion and provide direction for future consultations.

The "recommendations," writers, and respondents evidence an awareness of the differences not only between but within church families. These polarities within, along with the convergences between, will continue to stimulate discussion among Reformed and Mennonite pastors and students of religion.

Keith Graber Miller, Atlanta, Georgia

Amish in Eastern Ohio. Stanley A. Kaufman with Leroy Beachy. Walnut Creek: German Culture Museum, 1991. Pp. 52. \$12.00.

This book is the first extensive look at the material culture of the Ohio Amish, prepared, the authors say, first for the Amish community and also for the public. The book is organized into eight sections with topics such as immigration, Lancaster in Ohio, Architecture, Furniture, Quilts, Und So Weiter. Color plates, a bibliography and map are included. I recommend the book to the non-specialist as well as for the serious historian as both interesting and enjoyable.



Martin Boehm. According to Sangrey "Mennonites ought to formally rescind Martin Boehm's excommunication."

Stanley A. Kaufman, founder and curator of the German Culture Museum, provides insightful treatment of the Amish culture. Leroy Beachy, a scholar with an intimate knowledge of the history of the Holmes County settlement, also writes the *Budget* column "Unser Leit."

George M. Kreps, Wooster, Ohio

The Temple of Limestone: A History of Boehms Chapel, 1791-1991. Abram W. Sangrey, Lancaster, PA: Brookshire Printing, Inc., 1991. \$9.95.

The Temple of Limestone is not only a history of Boehms Chapel in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, it is also an episodic recounting of the lives of the two Mennonites-turned-revivalist-Protestants whose name is connected with it. Martin Boehm (1725-1812) was a Mennonite bishop whose revivalist activities and associations with more "worldly" Christians led to his excommunication. With Philip Otterbein of the German Reformed Church, he then formed the United Brethren in Christ Church.

Late in life Martin Boehm became associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church, which already held the allegiance of his son Henry (1775-1875). (The UB eventually became part

of the union which created the United Methodist Church.) This book illustrates the close connections among early Methodism, American Mennonites, and other German Protestants.

In spite of appearances to the contrary, the book is in the form of an anthology rather than a carefully structured study. Its sources, extracted at length and distinguishable only by slightly darker print, include a 1943 dissertation by the author, the *Reminiscences of Henry Boehm*, a replication of a filmstrip on the history of Boehms Chapel, and newspaper accounts from earlier celebrations there. Readers may find the format confusing, in part because it is sometimes unclear what is written by Sangrey, and what comes from his sources, and in part because the information often overlaps. This reviewer also found his enthusiastic expressions intrusive.

However, these criticisms should not obscure the value of this book. It is the starting point for future scholarship on this episode in American religious history. It describes (and embodies) very well the attraction and spiritual power of the revivalist-pietist synthesis of German-American evangelicals, and therefore is significant for Mennonites who want to understand the place of both movements in their past (and present).

Problems that need further discussion are illustrated by Sangrey's suggestion that Mennonites ought to formally rescind Martin Boehm's excommunication. But was all the wrong on the side of the Mennonites? How can Sangrey so enthusiastically proclaim the sacral character of Boehm's past, while that very past is built upon Boehm's denunciation of an even earlier sacral tradition as "formal" and "apostate"? What is the relationship of enthusiasm and tradition, of spirit and word, of pneuma and logos? These questions lie at the heart and origins of Anabaptist and Mennonite history and tradition.

David Wayne Layman, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

The Northern District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church 1891-1991: A History of the Conference Committees and

Churches of the Northern District Conference. Edited by Dena Schmidt, Freeman, S.D.: Northern District Conference, 1991. Pp. 227.

The Northern District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church comprises congregations in Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota. The total membership in 1990 was a little over 5,000, about nine percent of total General Conference membership. This book sets forth some of the experiences shaping the conference and its people since its founding in 1891.

The subtitle of the book quite accurately describes its content. One chapter is devoted to each of the conference standing committees and auxiliary organizations. The chapter on the home missions committee includes a brief history of each current congregation, plus descriptions of many extinct congregations and home missions projects.

District conference histories are rarely exciting reading, especially when no single author shapes the material into a unified whole. The Northern District history, though, offers many interesting tidbits of stories that could be told in more detail someday: the western parts of the district as a "frontier" area of Mennonite scattering and fragmentation, the great influence of the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren in the early years, and the Cheyenne churches in Montana.

John D. Thiesen, Newton, Kansas

I Saw It in THE BUDGET. Elmer S Yoder, Hartville, Ohio: Diakonia Ministries, 1990. Pp. 391. \$10.00.

Consider a frolic through Budget Land, guided by some 2,000 excerpts chosen by Elmer Yoder. Founded in 1890 by "Budget John" Miller in Sugar Creek, Ohio, the weekly newspaper quickly became a means of communication for Amish and Mennonite communities spread all over North America. Yoder provides a panorama of the various topics and themes covered by "scribes," those who write newsy letters for Budget publication. Chapter headings include Everyday Life, Courtship and Marriage, Social Banter, Names and Nicknames, a total

of 52 sections.

Just like reading last week's issue, the book contains humor, tragedy, cautious references to "church troubles," familiar names and places, community happenings, and the occasional hilarious story.

I Saw It in THE BUDGET should be taken as a sampler, not a guide for scholarly research. Few indications tell the uninitiated as to whether writers are Old Order Amish, Beachy Amish, Amish Mennonite, or something else entirely. The mixture of times within themes can be jarring, with letters from the 1890s and 1970s side by side. The subject index helps, although location and name indexes would increase the book's usefulness for historians. Above all, the book can be enjoyed by all readers, and just might send scholars scurrying to the microfilm to investigate some cryptic reference or intriguing topic.

Steven D. Reschly, Iowa City, Iowa

Recent Publications

Diller, Lynn M. **Family Record of Francis and Mary (Burkholder) Diller and their Descendants.** Pp. 82. Rose Yost, 355 Bullshead Rd., Newville, PA 17241.

Hoover, Harry M. **The Huber-Hoover Family History.** 1928, 1992 edition. Pp. 335. Amos B. Hoover, 376 N. Muddy Creek Road, Denver, PA 17517.

Janzen, Hedy. **Our Heritage: the Descendants of Heinrich P. Janzen.** Pp. 147. Hedy Janzen, 2-246 Home St., Winnipeg, MB R3G 1X3.

Kahn, Edythe T. **Hamilton and Susannah Nisewanger Kerr/Karr: their Ancestry and Descendants.** Pp. 226. \$27.50. Edythe T. Kahn, 12710 N. Lakeshore, LaSalle, MI 48145.

Stahl, Juaneva, and Rachel Stahl and Darlene Brandt. **Stahl: A Trip Through History.** 1991. Pp. 356. \$20.00. Darlene Brandt, Rt. 3, Box 371, Manheim, PA 17545.

Further information on the above books may be obtained from Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.

Juniata Mennonite District Historical Society

By Levi Miller


One of the smallest church constituencies to support a historical society is located in Snyder and Juniata Counties in Pennsylvania. The Juniata Mennonite District Historical Society is supported by a church constituency of fewer than 500 members, most of whom have ties to the larger Lancaster Conference about a two-hour drive to the south.

Founded in 1950, the Society has a Historical Center, library and archives in a small brick building near Richfield, Pennsylvania. Director of the center is Noah L. Zimmerman, a tall statuesque self-educated genealogist and historian who confesses to being unable to say no to anything old which is given to him. They need more space.

Zimmerman is co-author of *History of a John Graybill Family in America, 1754-1976* (1977) and edited *History of Lost Creek Mennonite Church and Its Community* (1962). Lloyd Graybill is

chair of the Society with 150 members, and secretary is J. Lloyd Gingerich, a local farmer historian who was also a charter member of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society board. Each year the society sponsors a field trip and program as well as operating the research center.

The Center has a range of historical resources, maps and documents, but is strongest in local genealogy. Collections range from the papers of African missionary, Clinton Ferster; to Argentine missionary, William G. Lauver; to a Benjamin Franklin signed deed. The Historical Center (HCR 63, Richfield, PA 17086, Tel. 717 694 3211) is open on Saturdays from nine to four, Tuesday evenings from seven to nine, and by appointment.

Many descendants left this rural community along the the foot of Shade Mountain, including the family of Daniel Kauffman, the long time Mennonite editor, to the Pellman family (Hubert, Ferne, Freda, Ellen, and Richard). Today the region, although rather few in number of Mennonites, has many varieties: Old Order Amish, Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Church, Middle Atlantic Fellowship, Old Order Mennonites (Tennessee, Horning, and Joni Martin), and Eastern District of the General Conference Mennonite Church. One of the earlier divisions was recently described in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage*, "Small Causes, Great Effects": The Richfield Mennonite Church Division of 1883-1884," January, 1992, p. 24. 

News and Notes

Common Threads: A Retrospective of Mennonite Attire is the theme of an exhibit at the MeetingHouse at Harleysville, Pennsylvania. The show includes the clothing styles of the southeastern Pennsylvania Mennonites around the turn of the twentieth century and the Swiss and Alsatian Mennonite costumes in the **Paul and Jean Kraybill Collection**. The exhibit opened in March and will continue through October 25.


Mennonite Church Historical Association Fall breakfast meetings, 8:00 a.m., will be held in the following communities. Members or interested people are welcome to attend by making reservations: Chicago, Illinois, October 24, **Jim Yordy** (708) 442-8130; Harrisonburg, Virginia, October 31, **Albert Keim** (703) 433-0543; Hesston, Kansas, November 14, **Marian Bontrager** (316) 327-4472.

A Michiana Mennonite historical society was organized on March 21, 1992, at a congregational historians meeting at the Townline Conservative Mennonite Church. The group plans to collect records, sponsor meetings, workshops, tours and publish periodic newsletters and "improve understanding of the Mennonite and Amish culture, heritage and faith." President is **Russell Krabill** and vice-president is **Dan Beachy**, both of Elkhart County. Memberships (\$5.00) are accepted from membership coordinator **Thelma Martin**, 10289 McKinley, Osceola, IN 46561.

Linda Huebert Hecht and **Arnold Snyder** of Waterloo, Ontario, are planning a book of profiles of Anabaptist women. The Conrad Grebel College researchers have solicited manuscripts of over 30 women in the first 100 years of Anabaptism.

John D. Roth, history professor at Goshen College, is participating in a summer seminar (June 22 to August 7) on "Religious Reform and Societal Change in the 16th Century" at Duke University. The seminar is convened by **Hans J. Hillerbrand**.

Jan Gleysteen, heritage keeper of Scottdale, Pennsylvania, will be in Europe from August 11 to September 8 studying and photographing early Amish communities. He will be traveling with **Bob Miller** and **Lloyd Troyer** of Elkhart County, Indiana.

An Amish International Symposium, 1693-1993, is planned at Sainte-Marie-Aux-Mines (Markirch) in France, August 19-21, 1993. Sponsored by the French, Swiss and German Mennonite historical societies, the meeting will include about 20 papers and discussion. For more information contact **Lydie Hege**, Hauptstr. 77, D-6919 Bammental, Germany. Tel.: 06223-49667. 



Noah L. Zimmerman, director of the Historical Center near Richfield, Pennsylvania, and a 1539 edition Froschauer Bible.

Archives of the Mennonite Church

By Dennis Stoesz

What follows is a sampling of acquisitions that have come into the archives during the first six months of 1992. They are arranged in alphabetical order by the name of the collection.

Beiler, Solomon K., 1798-1888, Belleville, Pennsylvania. Copy book, 1858-1887, which includes letters from the 1693 Swiss Anabaptist schism, discussion of the mode of baptism, family records for Beiler and spouse Sarah Hertzler (1799-1887), and a short article on whether a deacon should be ordained a bishop. Beiler was a bishop in the "Middle District" of an Amish congregation of Kishacoquillas Valley. Book is handwritten in Gothic script, and contains 76 written pages. One letter file folder. Donor: Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College, originally from Amos E. Yoder, Wayne County, Ohio.

Bender, Harold S., 1897-1962, Goshen, Indiana. Photographs, 1920s-35, of Mennonite emigrants from Canada to Paraguay, 1920s, of Mennonite emigrants from Russia to Paraguay, 1929-30, and of the Paraguay Mennonite settlements in 1935. 5 linear inches. Donor: Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College.

Goshen College, 1894-, Center for Discipleship, 1970-81, Goshen, Indiana. Records, 1962-81, includes correspondence, programs, minutes and some photographs of the many and various types of discipleship conferences sponsored by this center over an eleven-year period at Goshen College. Includes materials from the various directors, C. Norman Kraus, Paul M. Gingrich, Arthur E. Smoker Jr. and Don Blosser. 8.75 linear feet. Donor: Don Blosser.

Leo Mennonite Church, 1861-1991, Leo, Indiana. Records, 1939-90, which include financial record books on the church building fund, 1943-57. Materials also reflect contacts with the Maplewood Mennonite Church (General Conference), 1978-83, and the Trinity Worship Center, 1985-89, who

used the same building. The North Leo Mennonite Church, which built a building in 1966, continues today. 10 linear inches. Donor: Sherm Kauffman.

Mennonite Aid Association of Indiana and Michigan, 1911-, Goshen, Indiana. Records, 1991-92, of correspondence, minutes and reports of this aid organization which covers property loss as a result of fire, wind and storm, lightning, theft and vandalism. Membership is drawn from 90 Mennonite congregations. Materials are photocopies of originals. Two file folders. Donor: Oren Horst.

Mennonite Board of Missions, 1882-, Overseas Department, Elkhart, Indiana. Records and photographs, 1920s, 1956-75, including welcome address to John H. Mosemann by Ghana Mennonite Mission, 1956, an old group photograph from Bihar, India, with M. C. Lehman on it, a scrapbook of photographs from Bihar, India, 1957-74, and 1975 minutes and architectural drawings from the Union Biblical Seminary at Pune, India. 5 file folders (oversize). Donor: Ethel Hoffman.

Mennonite Mutual Aid, 1945-, Board of Directors, Goshen, Indiana. Reports and minutes, 1962-91, from the seventeen-member Board of Directors' meetings. This board was reorganized in 1964 to help integrate the eight corporations which had sprung up from 1945-64. In 1965, Abram P. Hallman was president, Richard Yordy was vice-president and C. L. Graber was treasurer. In 1991, Mary Swartley chaired the board. 6 linear feet. Donor: Peg Leatherman.

Mennonite Publishing House, 1908-, Scottdale, Pennsylvania. Video-tape, 1991, showing conversations among three of the publishers of Mennonite Publishing House, A.J. Metzler (1936-61), Ben Cutrell (1962-87), and Robert Ramer (1988-). Discussion, chaired by Leonard Gross, includes recollections, stories and explanations of Mennonite publishing through the years. One VHS video-tape, two hours in length, plus one master Super VHS. Donor: Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and Mennonite Publishing House.


Mennonite Publishing House, 1908-, Congregational Literature Division, Scottdale, Pennsylvania. Records, 1949-90, including correspondence, minutes, reports and pamphlets of the general "Educational

and Product Curriculum Development" of the 1950s and 1960s, and of the work of the Literature Division after 1971. Publications include *Christian Living*, Foundation Series for Youth and Adults, *Gospel Herald*, Mennonite Youth Fellowship Newsletters, *On the Line*, *Purpose*, *Wayfarers and Torchbearers*, War and Peace literature, and *With*. 23 linear feet. Donor: Tim Sprinkle.


Nunemaker, Carl W. (1896-1948) and **Mary (Dils) (1896-1989)**, Wakarusa, Indiana. Three farm ledgers, 1915-43, indicating detailed income and expenses for the Nunemaker's mixed farming operation from the middle of World War I through the 1920s, the Depression, and into World War II. Includes a nine-page story on the parents and the farm, written up by son John Nunemaker. 4.5 linear inches. Received February 1992. Donors: Sons Ivan, Willis and John Nunemaker.

Ortiz, Jose M., 1939-, Departamento de Ministerios Hispanos, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana. Personal papers and records, 1974-82, including correspondence, minutes and reports collected by Ortiz in his involvement as Associate General Secretary of the Office of Latin Concerns, Mennonite Church General Board, Elkhart, Indiana. It includes material from the Comité Administrativo of the Concilio Nacional de Iglesias Menonitas Hispanas, 1975-82. Most of the material is in Spanish. 18 linear inches. Donor: Jose M. Ortiz.

Sawatzky, Reynold, 1924-, Goshen, Indiana. Journal and photographs, 1951-53, of when Sawatzky served as Director of Material Aid in Germany for Mennonite Central Committee. 4.5 linear inches. Donor: Reynold Sawatzky.

Sommers, Harry, 1894-1984, Orrville, Ohio. Correspondence, documents and photographs, 1917-19, of when Sommers spent time as a conscientious objector at Camp Taylor, Kentucky, and at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, during World War I. One legal file folder. Received February 1992. Donor: Myron R. Sommers. 



The Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church met May 24-25 at Goshen College. The Committee reviewed a collection development policy for the Archives of the Mennonite Church and projected plans for an Amish 300th anniversary conference in the Fall of 1993 with the Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society and the General Conference Mennonite Church Historical Committee. Albert N. Keim of Eastern Mennonite College was recognized at a dinner for having served eight years as chair of the Committee. The new chair is Steven D. Reschly of Iowa City, Iowa. Members of the committee are: James O. Lehman, Carolyn C. Wenger, Steven D. Reschly, Beulah Stauffer Hostetler, Samuel Steiner, Albert N. Keim, Hope Kauffman Lind, and Gerald Hudson. Photo: Jan Gleysteen 

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The Origin, Development and Fate of the Mennonites Briefly Presented

By Harry Loewen

Anna Brons (1810-1902) is the author of the first Mennonite history in Germany. The book, with its long title, **Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale der Taufgesinnten oder Mennoniten in kurzen Zügen Übersichtlich dargestellt von Frauenhand** (Origin, Development and Fate of the Mennonites Briefly Presented by a Woman), appeared in 1884. It was dedicated to her "beloved husband, Isaac Brons, deacon in the Mennonite congregation in Emden." This gift "from a woman's hand" was a significant beginning in the writing of Anabaptist-Mennonite history.

The story of Anna Brons, of the world in which she lived, and of how she came to write her history, provides interesting and instructive insights into the faith and life of the Mennonites of North Germany in the nineteenth century. Living in Emden and being part of a community of prominent Mennonites, Anna Brons symbolized the strength and weaknesses of nineteenth-century German Mennonites.

Anna was born on November 23, 1810, in Norden, North-West Germany, to her parents the Cremer ten Doornkaats. Her father had come from Holland in 1806 and founded in Norden the famous Doornkaat distillery, whose schnapps is still produced and sold worldwide. Her mother died at Anna's birth, with the result that Anna spent her childhood and youth in the home of her uncle, S.D. Cremer of Norden.

Since there was no Mennonite school in this city, Mennonite children attended the local Lutheran school.



Anna Brons (1810-1902) of Emden, Germany, made a significant contribution to her people by writing the first Anabaptist Mennonite history in Germany. "Her deepest values will never become dated, and her life inspires serious reflection." This 1876 photo is from *Nachfahren von Ysaac Brons und Antje Brons*, a genealogy by Hella Brons.

Being an intellectually active and curious child, Anna learned easily. She memorized the *Apostles' Creed* and many biblical passages, but, as she tells us, the Lutheran ideas and view of the Christian faith were not to her liking. God the Father was portrayed as far removed, and Jesus Christ was pictured as sitting on the right hand of God who would someday return to judge the living and the dead.

In such an environment, Anna found it difficult to love God or Jesus. The stern images of the deity were intensified when she saw two pictures in a house she visited. The one portrayed the devil with horns, tail, and horse's hooves. The other showed Christ as a lamb holding a banner with one of his forelegs. The devil tortured the damned in hell with a fork, while the lamb listened to the hallelujahs of the redeemed in heaven. After seeing these pictures, young Anna was frightened and could not fall asleep. Only after a friend sang for her Claudius' famous evening song, "The moon has risen, the golden stars shine brightly in the sky," did she find peace and fall asleep.

The God Anna came to accept and love was the one described in Psalms 139 and 145 and presented in the Mennonite congregation. This God of her forebears was immediate, comforting, and loving. "I understood and responded to this love in my heart," Anna wrote. She experienced God as close to her and prepared to keep and guide her. She now felt liberated from the fear the *Apostles' Creed* and other images of God had caused her.

Even though Anna grew up in a Mennonite home and attended a Mennonite congregation, she did not

learn about the history of the Anabaptists there. It was through books in her uncle's library that she learned about the spiritual forebears of her people. Especially Thielman van Braght's *Martyrs Mirror*, a collection of stories and pictures portraying the suffering and death of Anabaptist men and women, made a profound impression.

Reading the Dutch text with some difficulty, Anna was deeply moved by the faith and perseverance of the sixteenth-century Christians who would rather die than deny their Lord. This rich spiritual heritage of the Mennonites inspired Anna later to write her history. Her book was to help her people, particularly the young among them, to appreciate and be guided by their past.¹

The Mennonite congregations in North Germany practiced Christian piety, emphasizing a rational, common-sense view of life. To be a good Christian and a useful, law-abiding citizen were one and the same. Mennonites were also good patriots, believing that their positive contribution to their community and society was part of their Christian obligations. A subjective inwardness and separation from communal and national affairs were foreign to them.

When Anna married Isaac Brons, she took for granted that she would support her husband in his political activities locally and on the national level. In fact, for both Anna and Isaac, political involvement and activity were part of their active Christian faith.

Anna and Isaac Brons contributed passionately toward the unification of Germany and fully supported the German royal house. Isaac was a

delegate to the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848 and an activist in local political affairs. The correspondence between Anna and Isaac indicates how involved and German the couple was. Their love of the fatherland included their willingness to defend their country militarily as well. Most German Mennonites, like their coreligionists in Holland, had given up their traditional principle of nonresistance, believing pacifism was not an essential aspect of faith.

The worship services in Anna's congregation were simple yet informative and heartwarming. The minister did not shout his message "over the heads of the congregation," but spoke calmly, as with friends. The devil and hell were not mentioned. Stressing the love of God and love for one another, the minister was appreciated and respected by his parishioners.

Sermons and religious meditation were supplemented by so-called secular readings. Anna read the world's classical writings, including the works of German masters. She was particularly drawn to Friedrich Schiller; the first edition of his works was in her library. She also read books dealing with theology, history, science, and psychology. Anna tells us that for her there was no strict division between the content of the Bible and literature and scholarship. "Truly, scholarship and faith complement each other," she wrote.

Anna's baptism and membership in the congregation did not mean a radical break with the way she had believed and lived before. Together with other young people, she continued to enjoy life, denying herself little. Young people did what was

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socially acceptable and proper. Drinking wine and smoking, for example, were not prohibited by the church. Anna tells us that her husband loved to dance. However, Isaac Brons rejected card and dice playing, not because it was wrong but because such games were a waste of time and money.

In all their freedom and love of life, Anna and Isaac had a deep faith which filled their life with meaning and purpose. Christianity was for both primarily a matter of ethics. Hans Denck's motto, "To know Christ is to follow him in life," was their conviction as well. The apostle Paul's theology concerning the redeeming power of Christ's death and resurrection was foreign to them. Christ was for them the prophet and teacher of eternal truths, truths which restored and promoted human dignity, freedom, and wholesome duty toward fellow human beings.

The Brons were deeply involved in the work of their congregation and community. They served human needs in Emden and beyond wholeheartedly and sacrificially. During a difficult winter, they helped the unemployed. They set up soup kitchens for the poor and donated woollens and other materials for women's and children's clothes. Anna was especially involved in women's societies and organizations for the assistance of wounded soldiers. Her help extended to friends and enemies alike.

These values and a spirit of sacrifice the Brons also instilled in their nine children. Most of the children joined the Mennonite congregation and all made the love, the ethical morality, and the spirit of tolerance of their parents their own. Bernhard, Anna's oldest son, assisted his mother with the history of the Mennonites she began to write in her last decades of life.

In writing the history for which she is remembered, Anna Brons was influenced by several scholars, especially Ludwig Keller, who toward the end of the nineteenth century had written on Hans Denck and on the Anabaptist movement in general. Reading all the available primary and secondary sources and gathering the material for her work, Anna was motivated by two things in writing her Mennonite history. First was her sense of justice, which compelled her to set straight the record of the



*Claas Wessel Brons (1845-1918), son of Anna and Isaac Brons in 1871. Most German Mennonites, like their coreligionists in Holland, "had given up their traditional principle of nonresistance, believing pacifism was not an essential aspect of faith." Photo from *Nachfahren von Ysaac Brons und Antje Brons, a genealogy* by Hella Brons.*

misunderstood and misrepresented Mennonites.


Second, the Anabaptist Mennonite story needed to inspire the young among the Mennonites to follow the faith and values of their spiritual forebears. Anna was convinced that if a congregational community was ignorant of its past, it could not survive and prosper. A community's heritage, according to Anna, was the foundation upon which its faith and piety rested. There was thus a pedagogical purpose to the writing of her history.

Anna Brons' history has been superseded by better, more scholarly Mennonite histories in our century. Her work, however, was one of the first serious attempts to rehabilitate the maligned and persecuted Anabaptists and to help Mennonites appreciate their tradition and values. With her history Anna Brons also made the Mennonite faith relevant in her time.

In telling the Mennonite story, the author was guided by the insight that the faith and life of a people are not static, but develop and change according to times and circumstances.

She thus believed that the German Mennonites of her time had remained faithful to the original principles of Anabaptism, even though they had altered or given up practices they no longer deemed important or relevant. Traditional nonresistance, for example, no longer applied in a modern nation state, she held, but the principle and practice of Christian love and peace remained and applied to enemies as well.

With Julia Hildebrandt we might agree that in today's world Anna Brons' view of church and state seems overly optimistic. We recognize today that a Christian's faith is often in conflict with the nature and objectives of states and power politics. We have become more skeptical of the intentions and practices of governments and the many institutions that need to be confronted and challenged with the claims of the gospel. Even the church as an institution leaves much to be desired and is in need of renewal; Anna Brons and her community were less aware of this.

Nevertheless, Anna Brons remains a shining example of a woman, wife, mother, Mennonite, and historian. Her deepest values will never become dated, and her life inspires serious reflection. 

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A Farewell to Farms: The 1934 New York Missionary Departure

By Steve Nolt

Late Monday evening, February 19, 1934, snow began falling in New York City. Throughout the night and into the next morning it continued. By midday Tuesday the accumulation had blocked streets and streetcar tracks, disrupted communication, and trapped employees at their workplaces. *The New York Times* ranked the storm as one of the worst blizzards in years, but also reported that hard-working residents were diligently struggling to free stranded hospitals and open train lines.¹

As New York City was still digging out its rail service from the effects of unusually harsh winter weather, it received several train car loads of very unusual visitors. Four hundred fifty-one Mennonites from eastern Pennsylvania and Virginia poured into Manhattan on Wednesday, February 21, to bid farewell to Africa-bound Mennonite missionaries. The huge crowd of plain-dressed folk captured the city's attention as they traveled from Pennsylvania Station to the missionaries' ship at the 44th and 46th Streets piers, then to a Fifth Avenue restaurant and back again to the docked ocean liner. All of the major city periodicals reported the visit, making it one of the most widely publicized events in Mennonite history.

Edmund Gilligan, reporter for the *The New York Sun*, suggested that the sudden appearance of the huge Mennonite entourage "was easily the strangest sight since the Dutch carried their own brand of the gospel to the Indians of Manhattan."² The magazine *Literary Digest* noted that the four hundred Mennonites created "a strange sight even for New York, accustomed as it is to the unusual."³ Several of the press accounts included photographs of the "plain-garbed followers of Menno Simons."⁴

The widely reported Mennonite excursion to New York City was not a casual sight-seeing tour. The dozens of

men and women who took the time and money to make the trip during the financially uncertain years of the Great Depression were demonstrating their support for their church's first missionaries to East Africa. That mission work had been a long time in planning, and its inauguration was quite exciting for large numbers of east coast "old" Mennonites.

Forty years earlier, in 1894, John H. Mellinger of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, organized a committee to encourage and support home and foreign mission activities. Two decades later the group received the official blessing of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference and took the name Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (EMBMC). The new Board had a very limited budget for foreign mission work, but it set out to collect funds in the hope of eventually sponsoring overseas church workers. In 1930 the Board of Bishops, governing body of the Lancaster Conference, unanimously called on the Mission Board to send workers to Africa.⁵

Mennonite missionaries had been in Africa as early as 1890. That year Mennonite Brethren in Christ evangelist Eusebius Hershey (1823-1891) traveled to Liberia. In 1898 and 1906 Brethren in Christ church workers arrived in Southern and Northern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe and Zambia). After 1911 the United Mennonite Board of Missions, sponsored by the Defenseless Mennonite Church and the Central Conference Mennonite Church, officially began a Mennonite witness in the Belgian Congo (Zaire). Nine years later Mennonite Brethren missionaries arrived in the Congo, as well.

There were no "old" Mennonite missionaries in Africa, however, and the Lancaster-based board decided to place its first volunteers there. Those volunteers were Elam W. (1899-1981) and Elizabeth Kauffman (1900-1947)

Stauffer, John H. (1907-1989) and Ruth Histand (b.1909) Mosemann, and Merle W. (1908-1991) and Sara Zook (b.1907) Eshleman.

Meeting with the Mission Board, Eshleman announced his desire to receive medical training before leaving for Africa. All decided that Sara and Merle should wait stateside until he could complete the required course work. The Board of Bishops realized that such study would "require considerable financial help on the part of individuals or the church for this preparation," and hoped that "the Lord will lay it upon the hearts of his people to assist Bro. Eshleman to obtain the required medical courses, that he may use his God-given gifts in the advancement of His cause and the spread of the Gospel."⁶ (The Eshleman's did eventually spend the years 1940-1954 in East Africa, with Merle serving as mission physician.

Meanwhile the Stauffers sold their farm and the Mosemann's freed themselves from their involvement in a family business. Both couples prepared to leave for Africa.

In December, 1933, Elam Stauffer and EMBMC Vice President Orie O. Miller left for East Africa to begin making contacts and choosing a site to begin church work. They explored mission opportunities in the Sudan, but finally decided on the eastern shores of Lake Victoria in the British-ruled territory of Tanganyika. Stauffer and Miller cabled Elizabeth and the Mosemanns, telling them to come to Dar es Salaam, Tanganyika.⁷

The three spent a busy January packing and preparing to leave. Meanwhile mission advocates encouraged the church to show its support of Stauffer and the Mosemanns by attending a special commissioning service. On Sunday, February 18, Lancaster County Mennonites packed the East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church "from balcony to basement to hear the farewell message" of Elizabeth, John,



Mennonites aboard the S.S. Deutschland in New York harbor on February 21, 1934: demonstrating support for the Lancaster Conference's first missionaries to East Africa and possibly one of the most publicized events in Mennonite history. Photo: Lancaster New Era, February 22, 1934, Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

and Ruth.⁸ The missionaries then left immediately for New York City and last minute travel arrangements there. But scores of family members, friends, and mission supporters also made plans to travel to New York and personally bid the party farewell. On Wednesday morning, 368 fellow church members boarded train coaches for New York. Another eighty-three, including nine from Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, Virginia, traveled by bus or car.⁹

About 1:30 in the afternoon, the Mennonites arrived in New York City. The group of several hundred plain-dressed men and women drew curious looks from the city's daily commuters and passers-by. One Mennonite who arrived by rail, Anna Zimmerman, remembered that "in the [New York City train] station we saw many faces turned our way. I imagine they wondered where we all came from."¹⁰ Onlookers had little time to stare, however, as the Mennonites moved quickly onto buses which took them directly to the missionaries' ship **Deutschland**, a five-deck passenger liner of the Hamburg-American Line.

The group met the missionaries and toured the vessel. The cruise line played special host to this unusual group of well-wishers. Ship kitchen staff seated the Mennonites in the formal dining room and served tea and cookies to all. The group sang several hymns including one in German, especially for the ship's German-speaking crew and staff.¹¹

At 4:45 that afternoon the entire entourage took buses up through the city to an "automat restaurant" at Fifth Avenue and Forty-fifth Street. (Customers at an "automat" purchased food from nickel-operated vending machines.) Here the Mennonites drew the greatest reaction from New York natives, since the church group not only ate, but also held a two and one half hour-long prayer and hymn service right in the restaurant.

"Hymns rang loud and clear above the clatter of dishes and nickels," one **New York Herald Tribune** reporter wrote. "Countermeals slopped soup, the cashier fumbled her piles of coins and customers poised forks in air, as . . . the strange-garbed followers of the

anabaptist Menno Simons streamed down stairs from the street above" and into the automat.¹²

A correspondent for the **Literary Digest** drew an even more dramatic picture of the group's entrance into the restaurant: "A spoon clattered into a saucer, a morsel missed a diner's mouth, and everybody looked up, awed and silent before the advancing [Mennonite] host."¹³

The **New York Times** also ran a story describing the Mennonite hymn service. While the article was not as long as those of the other New York dailies, it did imply that a **Times** reporter had been on the scene and had interviewed Mission Board Chair John Mellinger. The **Times** correspondent was especially impressed with the efficiency of automat owner Charles Zelenko. The "devotional service continued without interrupting the regular flow of patrons in and out of the eating place," the reporter noted, adding that the Mennonites had made prior arrangements with the automat management.¹⁴

Intrigued by the Mennonites, the reporters followed the group as they


left Fifth Avenue and returned to the ship. On board the **Deutschland**, the press witnessed the worship service which continued from about nine to eleven o'clock that night. The three missionaries addressed the group, as did Mission Board Chair Mellinger, and Anna Engel, a furloughed Brethren in Christ mission worker from Rhodesia.¹⁵

The group also sang quite a number of hymns. One reporter was shocked by the mission hymn "Africa." While the lyrics spoke of a "land of open doors" in which "countless souls in darkness sleep," the song brought other images to the newspaperman's mind. For "much to the astonishment of the [non-Mennonite] passengers and others at the door," the hymn's tune "was the melody of the extremely tender love song known as 'Juanita,' in which the beloved young lady is asked many passionate questions." The Mennonites were "oblivious of the romantic sources of their song," the reporter was certain, since they all "pitched in heartily, their voices breaking over the melodious, tender passages."¹⁶

More songs and speakers continued the farewell service until the Mennonites had to leave the ship soon after 11 pm. The immediate families of Stauffer and the Mosemanns remained behind for final good-byes, until they, too, had to make their way to the pier. Two minutes into Thursday morning, the ship left its dock.

The well-wishers left standing on the shore returned to their own homes that same morning, many catching the 3 a.m. train out of New York. The Mosemanns and Stauffer, meanwhile, had begun the first leg of their month and a half-long journey to East Africa and the beginnings of Mennonite Church witness and mission in Tanzania.

For many of the four hundred fifty-one Mennonites who spent the day in Manhattan, the snow-filled Wednesday in February 1934 was their first visit to New York City. The metropolis itself had seemed almost like a foreign land to many. Anna Zimmerman called it "a dreary place."¹⁷ Then too, the glitter and sparkle of other parts of the city had shocked the Mennonites' sense of modesty and simplicity. Speaking at the automat hymn and prayer service,

mission advocate Ira D. Landis had declared that "Jesus is blind to Broadway."¹⁸ Yet Landis had also said that the Mennonites should not "be surprised to see Him [Jesus] even in New York." Fifteen years later Lancaster Conference Mennonite voluntary service workers returned to New York City—this time to invite its people into the family of faith.¹⁹ 

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¹ **The New York Times**, 22 February 1934, p. 1.

² Edmund Gilligan, "Mennonite Mission Leaves," **The New York Sun**, 22 Thursday 1934. Clipping in the collection of Mary Herr, Lititz, Pa., now in the care of the author.

³ "Mennonites Hold Service in a Restaurant," **The Literary Digest** 10 March 1934, p. 20.

⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵ Mahlon M. Hess, **Pilgrimage of Faith: Tanzania Mennonite Church, 1934-1983** (Musoma and Tarime, Tanzania, and Salunga, Pa.: Tanzania Mennonite Church and Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, 1985), pp. 23, 24. Theron F. Schlabach, **Gospel Versus Gospel: Mission and the Mennonite Church, 1863-1944** (Scottsdale, Pa. and Kitchener, Ont.: Herald Press, 1980), pp. 69, 145.

⁶ Minutes, Board of Bishops, Lancaster Mennonite Conference, 19 April 1933, Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society Archives, Lancaster, Pa.

⁷ Hess, **Pilgrimage of Faith**, p. 26. Paul Erb, **Orie O. Miller: The Story of a Man and an Era** (Scottsdale, Pa., 1969), p. 191.

⁸ Ira D. Landis, "The New York Farewell," **Gospel Herald** 1934, p. 1053.

⁹ *Ibid*. Of those traveling by train, 352 were from the Lancaster, Pa. area, 3 from Coatesville, Pa., 3 from Paoli, Pa., and 10 joined the train at Philadelphia. In the bus and car group, 9 were from Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, Va., 10 from New Holland, Pa., 35 from Reading and Morgantown, Pa., and 29 from Doylestown, Pa.

¹⁰ [Anna Zimmerman], "My Diary of the Trip to New York City, Feb. 21-22, 1934," five type-written pages composed shortly after the event. Includes detailed listings of the speakers and hymns sung at both the restaurant and ship-board services. Mary Herr Collection.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 2.

¹² **New York Herald Tribune** article reprinted the same day as "N.Y. Paper Describes Visit of Mennonites," **Lancaster** (Pa.) **New Era**, 22 February 1934, Mary Herr Collection. (The **Herald Tribune** was a morning paper and the **New Era** an evening release.)

¹³ "Mennonites Hold Service," **The Literary Digest**, p. 20.

¹⁴ "Automat Is Host to Church Group," **The New York Times** 22 February 1934, p. L, 21 BQ.

¹⁵ [Zimmerman], "My Diary," pp. 3-5.

¹⁶ Gilligan, "Mennonite Mission Leaves," **The New York Sun**, 22 February 1934.

¹⁷ [Zimmerman], "My Diary," p. 1.

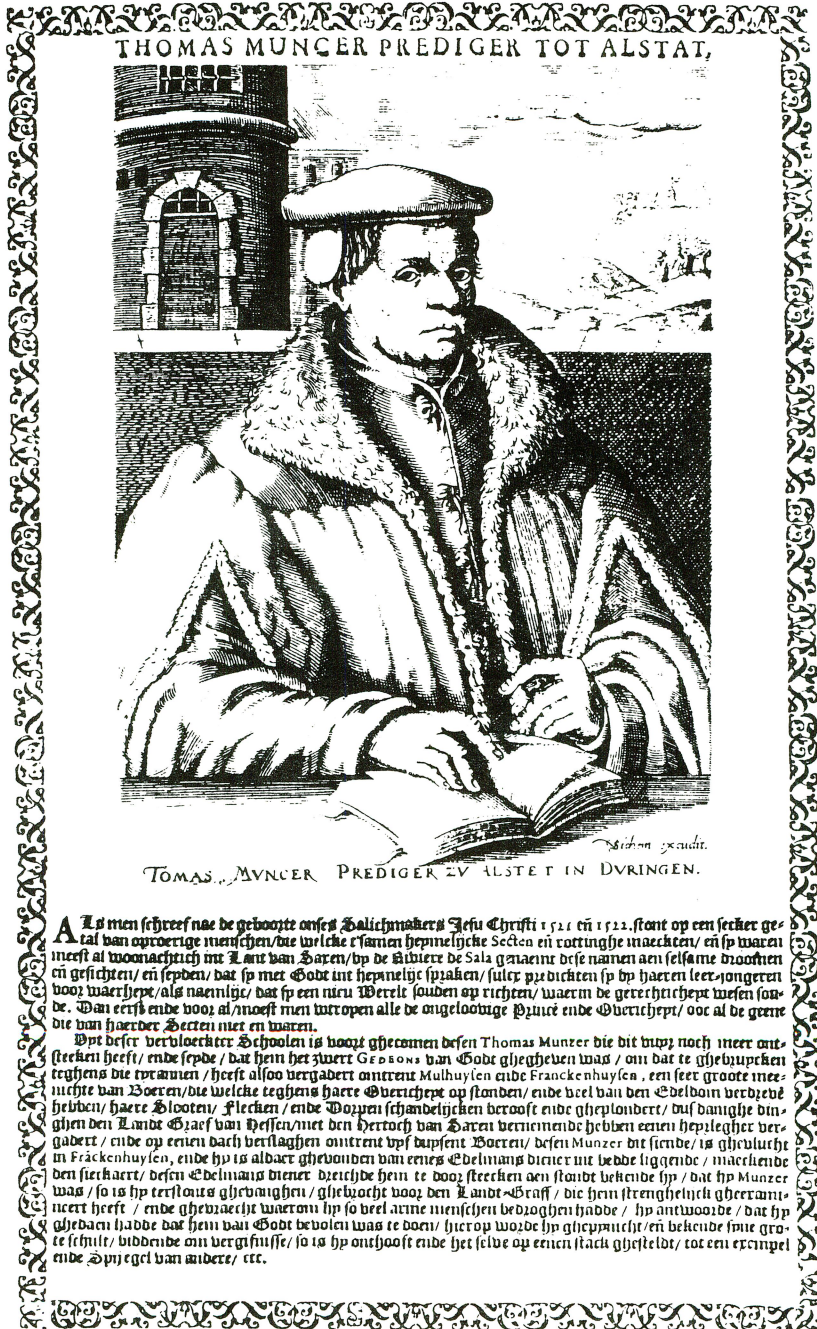
¹⁸ Gilligan, "Mennonite Mission Leaves," **The New York Sun**, 22 February 1934.

¹⁹ "5th Ave. Automat Rings to Hymns of Mennonites," **Lancaster** (Pa.) **New Era**, Mary Herr Collection.

²⁰ On the 1949 beginnings of the Fox Street Mennonite Church (now Burnside Mennonite Fellowship), see "250 Years Light from a Hill: Mellinger District," [Lancaster, Pa.: Mellinger District Churches, 1967], p. F-3, F-7.

Thomas Müntzer, Anabaptism and the German Peasants' War

By Ray C. Gingerich



Thomas Müntzer: "evaded, ignored or made anathema by Mennonites throughout most of the twentieth century renaissance of Anabaptist studies." Was he mainly a theologian or a political revolutionary? Photo: Mennonite Historical Library.

Thomas Müntzer, whom Robert Friedmann identified as "perhaps the most controversial figure of the German Reformation," remains enigmatic as he continues to lure the attention of historians and theologians. The Luther scholar, Karl Holl, already in 1923, dubbed Müntzer "the beginner of the Anabaptist movement," while throughout the former East Germany, Müntzer was hailed as the "harbinger of modern socialism."

But among most Mennonite scholars of Harold S. Bender's era, the 1920s through the 60s and the monumental four-volume *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Thomas Müntzer was seen as a detractor from the Anabaptist cause. Müntzer led the peasants into battle in 1525 and never accepted adult believers' baptism. He was antithetical to Mennonite passive nonresistance and separatist voluntarism.

Did not the proto-Anabaptist Conrad Grebel and his friends already in 1524 recognize this difference in a letter addressed to Müntzer? These Anabaptists declared that "with Christians all killing has ceased"? Contemporary Mennonites who hold to an understanding of their Anabaptist heritage as a spiritual and mystical renewal detached from the political events of the day, also consider Müntzer to be peripheral and inconsequential.

But the Müntzer who has been evaded, ignored or made anathema by Mennonites throughout most of the twentieth-century renaissance of Anabaptist studies cannot be pushed into oblivion. Hans Hut, the most prominent of Anabaptist missionaries, was a follower of Thomas Müntzer. James Stayer, in his 1972 publication *Anabaptists and the Sword*, documented that Hut and many of his early followers were not quick to renounce all violence.

Furthermore, Anabaptism in South and Central Germany emerged during the same period that the peasants' movement was gaining momentum. Scholars in Anabaptism, to varying

Thomas Muntzer: A Tragedy of Errors. Eric Gritsch.
Minneapolis: Fortress Press,
1989. Pp. 159. \$18.95.

Thomas Muentzer, a Destroyer of the Godless. Abraham Friesen. Berkley: University of California Press, 1990. Pp. 331. \$39.95.

The German Peasants' War and the Anabaptist Community of Goods. James M. Stayer. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press. 1991. Pp. 227. \$34.95.

degrees both in Eastern Europe and in the West, have with increasing thoroughness shown Anabaptism to have been a peoples' movement. Its roots were in the economic and political soil of the time, as well as the religious.

The three works being reviewed here share a common interest in the early sixteenth-century revolutionary leader Thomas Muntzer and the German Peasants' War (though in Stayer's work Muntzer is co-incidental to the Peasants' War and to the community of goods). But what was Muntzer's role as a revolutionary in the peasant's movement? On these issues the three authors differ significantly.

Only Stayer addresses the relationship of Muntzer and the Peasants' War to the Anabaptists. For Stayer, as we shall see, it is not Muntzer's mode of revolution but the Anabaptist community of goods that becomes the radicalized form of the peasants' movement and the Reformation.

Gritsch's work, if viewed alone, might be seen as an extended appendage to his earlier work on Muntzer, *Reformer Without a Church* (Fortress, 1967). Muntzer's "quest for an invincible faith" constitutes a key thread running through this account. Gritsch, however, wishes to avoid the temptation of finding a single "leitmotif by which one can reconstruct the 'live' Muntzer" and he faults those who seek to do so (p. 127).

In this work, as in Gritsch's previous writing, Muntzer is portrayed as "the first Protestant theocrat." But it was left to Zwingli

and Calvin, notes Gritsch, to realize what Muntzer had in mind (p. 111). Such a thesis, it would appear, is based more on theological postulation than on historical documentation. It is not one that shares the consensus of Muntzer scholarship on the Reformation.

Gritsch helps us to see a Muntzer who may have been in Luther's orbit and whom Luther for a period of time clearly regarded as a supporter of his reform, but one who was also ahead of Luther. Already prior to the Leipzig Debate, for example, Muntzer claimed that Councils may err (pp. 12, 125). Those seeking an appreciative and very readable orientation to Thomas Muntzer may find Gritsch's work a fine place to begin. But those already familiar with Gritsch's earlier work would be better advised to search elsewhere.

Abraham Friesen's work is a tour de force, an effort to develop an understanding of Muntzer that is not forged out of the economic and political events of 1521-1525. "Issues raised at that debate [the Leipzig Disputation of 1519] which Muntzer attended," notes Friesen, "determined the direction of his reading and study for some time" (p. 6). Friesen, in fact, makes the case that the immersion of Tauler just prior to this meeting and the materials evoked during the Leipzig Disputation determined the direction of Muntzer for the rest of his life.

Meticulously rooting his study in the primary sources, Friesen provides an interpretation of Muntzer in contradistinction by that offered by social historians—both by Marxist scholars since World War II and by those using a more "western" sociology of revolution. Positively stated, this is a scrupulous effort to establish the basis of Muntzer's actions in the mysticism of Tauler and pseudo-Tauler, a la Luther, (chap. 1); in Eusebius' understanding of the fallenness of the church (chap. 2); in Augustine's perspective of separating the wheat from the tares (chap. 3); in Huss, as one who envisioned a New Apostolic church (chap. 5); and further modeled after the Old Testament reformer of the godless, King Josiah (p. 195).

From Tauler Muntzer gains the concept of the "inner word" of God; from Eusebius, the "outer word" as the Apostolic Church which Muntzer took

as normative for all times (p. 50). Muntzer's conversion and his understanding of the "abyss of the soul" is modeled after Augustine and the Platonists (p. 55). His eschatology, notes Friesen, also comes from Augustine, and not from Joachim of Fiore or from the Zwickau prophets (p. 82-88).

All of these foundation stones, except perhaps the model of King Josiah, Friesen argues, were already in place prior to, and largely extraneous from, the events leading directly into the German Peasants' War. None of Muntzer's revolutionary concepts, therefore, were borrowed from the Bohemian Taborites during his time in Prague—an element which continues to receive considerable credence in Gritsch.

All of this Friesen bases on an investigation into the reading Muntzer did beginning with Tauler just prior to the Leipzig Debate and extending to the summer of 1520. It constitutes the basis on which Friesen establishes Muntzer's intellectual transformation by the Holy Spirit (pp. 20, 22, 24). Friesen's argument is filled with rich insights and the work provides a wealth of knowledge presented in a way that holds the reader spellbound.

Despite the rigor of Friesen's argument based on the history of ideas, significant questions remain unanswered—mostly questions which Friesen himself does not ask. In addition to the questions which the social historian must raise (and which Stayer constructively weaves into his thought) there are problems which a history of ideas cannot ultimately escape. How readily are the sources of Muntzer's ideas established? And what are the determinants of his compelling convictions? Did he, for example, gain his view of the members of the "Apostolic Church" as "renouncing their property and holding their goods in common" from Eusebius (p. 49)? Would a more plausible theory conclude that Muntzer discovered "community of goods" in a re-reading of the Book of Acts?

Questions also emerge at a more philosophical level: can we simply assume that words convey only one meaning and that we need to probe no further regarding the nature of the reality understood by them? Was, for example, the term "Holy Spirit" as

Müntzer used it sufficiently clear to the peoples of Müntzer's society that we can simply assume they were of one common understanding as to its meaning? And that what Müntzer meant then (in an era in which a metaphysical world view held dominance) is what "we" mean today (in a culture in which the empirical and the historical constitute the dominant undercurrent of reality)? If, in the process of writing history, the meanings become all the more garbled, what history have we then written?

Perhaps if the above issues were more adequately addressed we would be able to better understand Müntzer at the end of his life (pp. 259-272). How is it that a man so creative in leadership, so gifted in organizational skills, so bold (if not always courageous) and so totally committed to the presence of the Holy Spirit, seeks to resolve his "failures" by focusing on the commoners' gross selfishness (p. 267)? The dynamics of the situation are so much more multifaceted than an analysis of ideas can convey. One is left with the uneasy feeling that not only were dimensions of Müntzer left unresolved but certain key concepts were undiscovered.

In **The German Peasants' War and Anabaptist Community of Goods** James Stayer presents us with a ground-breaking synthesis. The first half of the book consists of three essays related to the Peasants' War. The second half focuses on the Anabaptist community of goods. The work consists of all previously unpublished materials except for an earlier version of chapter 3, "Anabaptists and Future Anabaptists in the Peasants' War" published in the **Mennonite Quarterly Review** in 1988, and chapter 6, "Anabaptist Münster, 1534-1535: the War Communism of Notables," published in **Radical Tendencies in the Reformation: Divergent Perspectives**, ed. by Hans Hillerbrand (Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers).

The initial chapter on "Current Historiography" is a well nuanced analytical essay of twentieth-century (but particularly since World War II) scholarship on the sixteenth-century German Peasants' War. Stayer traces the peasants' uprisings throughout Germany during the years 1524-1527, establishing the one common element throughout this complex, multifaceted movement to be neither economic

'Bad Uli' and an Anabaptist Pigeon Shoot

When Girenbader set out from Rütli to Zurich he was accompanied by Uli Seiler, "the Anabaptist with one hand." This was probably the "bad Uli," a particular thorn in the side of Zurich officialdom in Grüningen. He was described by the governor Berger as one of the first Anabaptists in the area; he led a prison breakout in Grüningen in February 1526 and repeatedly denounced the disputation of November 1525 with which the government had tried to silence the Grüningen Anabaptists. He went around with a gun and carried through one of the more imaginative disruptions of a sermon in the early Zurich Reformation—according to Berger, a pigeon shoot directed at the church tower, "while the priest was proclaiming God's Word... which was a terrible shame and disgrace!" Uli certainly does not fit the stylized requirements of a non-resistant Anabaptist, but in the beginning of the movement rejection of the world and its "Big Jacks" could express itself in ways more exuberant than those that became conventional later.

From **The German Peasants' War and Anabaptist Community of Goods**, page 75.

oppression nor rising expectations, but the Reformation. "No economic, no political factor was general to it the way the Reformation was. The 'Peasants' War' was the form of the Reformation in the south German villages . . . just as much . . . as the movements stemming from Wittenberg or Geneva" (pp. 43-44).

Stayer traces the rural German commoners' rejection of the established order—both the clerical and the aristocratic—in the hope of replacing it with justice and equity based on the divine law of Scripture. The Reformation was moved toward a more radical expression leading to a community of goods.

The second half of this work focuses on "Anabaptist community of goods." Stayer defines this community more broadly than the specific practices of the Hutterites, yet he wishes to clearly distinguish it from later Mennonite practice which he defines as "an economics of mutual aid" (p. 9). "Community of goods meant what is described in Acts 2 and 4 . . ." (p. 98). "It was a rule of sharing and a rule against exploitation" (p. 106). Stayer further wishes to detach community of goods from a particular class or estate, and sees it as an expression of sixteenth-century commoners (inclusive of artisans, miners and townspeople) generally.

Anabaptism in Münster is seen as a quasi aberration—a "war

communism" carried out not by the peasants and commoners, but by the "notables" who in a unique political situation gained control of the city government. In the midst of a series of essays on community of goods among the Swiss Brethren, Anabaptist-Münster and Anabaptist Moravia, is a chapter on Thomas Müntzer and the Anabaptism that emerged in the wake of the peasants' defeat.

In new socio-political dimensions and with greater insight and clarity than has hitherto been shown, Stayer develops the historical linkages between the Peasants' War and the Anabaptists and between larger disenfranchised groups of commoners and a radicalized form of the Gospel as evidenced in a community of goods. The commoners' "conception of the social meaning of the law of God was not moderated by military defeat; instead it underwent a further stage of radicalization." It became a community of goods (p. 60).


"It was only coincident with the final defeat of the commoners that an unreconciled minority trusted to God to break down the hierarchy of the estates entirely" (p. 60). Future scholars will debate this issue more definitively. Some, especially sociologists, may also find Stayer's "community of goods" a bit too loosely defined and too malleable. But Stayer has so convincingly presented the historical data of the sixteenth

century that future scholars working in Anabaptism cannot avoid coming to terms with his work before going beyond it.

To the sixteenth-century specialist very few of Stayer's sources are new. But he has read old materials with new lenses. In so doing, he has challenged old assumptions and has laid the basis for a major reassessment of the Radical Reformation. The contributions of this work lie in at least three areas: 1) Stayer has redefined "community of goods" to free it from the more limited understanding applicable chiefly to the Hutterites and to provide the "tool" for a new analysis of Anabaptism.

2) Whereas much of Stayer's earlier work underscored the disparity within Anabaptism, this work provides the conceptual framework for a new synthesis and establishes a significant commonality running through all the major streams of Anabaptism.

3) Stayer has immensely broadened the relevancy of Anabaptism for social ethics. So significant was Anabaptism's challenge to the materialism and the injustices of power in the sixteenth century, that it dare not be avoided by any twentieth-century group that lays claim to the Anabaptist tradition.

This is a major landmark which, I would venture to say, will be even more important—and more difficult for Mennonites to cope with—than was Stayer's 1972 work, *Anabaptists and the Sword*. 

Ray C. Gingerich is a professor of history at Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary at Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Book Reviews

Seeking Peace. Titus and Linda Gehman Peachy. Intercourse Pa.: Good Books, 1991. Pp. 238. \$11.95.

Seeking Peace is a resource book for pastor, teachers and parents. Anyone attempting to communicate the unique peace gospel of Mennonites will find in this book a gold mine for illustrations. **Seeking Peace** is a collection of 70 stories from around the world describing not so ordinary Christians, struggling to live their belief in peace.

As a public speaker, I am often reading with an eye for practical illustrations to use that will help listeners connect with a sermon. Here I found stories worth retelling.

Often the peace stories that get retold are daring, dramatic and a bit out of reach for the average Sunday church attender. In **Seeking Peace**, I discovered the story of Joan Gerig entitled "Sermons on the Street." Her intensity and strength of conviction did not happen quickly; it was a process of God working in her life. Joan's story will connect with most people, because it describes her evolution as a peacemaker.

Seeking Peace reveals the complexity of peacemaking. In the story "Getting a 'Value Job' in the U.S. Military," the reader is treated to Ruth Yoder Stauffer's reflections as a nurse in Vietnam where the U.S. military becomes an agent to lessen suffering.

The stories are short, easy to read, and helpful for anyone interested in passing on the heritage of peace that is so central to the Mennonite churches.

Larry Hauder, Boise, Idaho

John Smith's Congregation: English Separatism, Mennonite Influence, and the Elect Nation. James R. Coggins. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1991. Pp. 240. \$29.95.

This book is volume 32 in the series, *Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History*, and was originally a 1986 doctoral dissertation at the University of Waterloo. The enigmatic John Smyth was a leader of a group of English separatists who fled to the Netherlands in mid-1608, there coming into contact with a group of Waterlander Mennonites. Smyth's study of the New Testament led him to the conclusion that believer's baptism was the only true baptism.

After baptizing himself and several of his congregation, he began negotiations with the Mennonites about the possibility of uniting with them. At about this time several of the members of the Smyth congregation, under the leadership of Thomas Helwys, split away. Soon after, the Smyth congregation petitioned to join the Mennonites, while Helwys insisted to the Waterlanders that they deny the request. Smyth died before the union

could take place.

Helwys returned with a small remnant to England where his church was the first English General Baptist church. Most Anglo-Saxon Baptist historians trace the origins of the baptists back to Helwys and not to the Smyth group. This study of Coggins provides a detailed study of Smyth and his congregation and suggests interesting possibilities about the linkages between Dutch Mennonites and the first English Baptists. The book reads much like a dissertation and will be of greater interest to scholars and serious students than to general readers.

H. Wayne Pipkin, Elkhart, Indiana

The Gift of Presence: Stories that Celebrate Nurses Serving in the Name of Christ. Dave and Neta Jackson and Beth Landis. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1991. \$8.95.

Fifty personal-interest stories from Mennonite nurses were selected for this volume to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Mennonite Nurses Association. The stories span more than the 50 years and include a wide range of nursing practice settings. Reflecting Mennonite nursing's commitment to support missions, story locations are scattered over four continents, and each writer's style is preserved.


The nurses recall the drama of births and death, and the exceptional wounds and pathology, especially in unusual circumstances such as handicaps of time, resources, and politics. Ideal nursing is also remembered. One patient who after observing her roommate's last months and hours, tells her nurse: "I hope you are here when I die." Strong in human interest, the stories have memorable patients, special relationships, humor and a few miracles.

The art of nursing (assessment, physical care, teaching, being the patient's advocate, providing support, referral) coupled with caring in the name of Christ makes these vignettes an interesting and inspirational tribute to Christian nurses. They will, however, remain of most interest to nurses and would be nurses.

Carolyn Nafziger, Minier, Illinois



“Warwick Mennonite Institute” and Eastern Mennonite College

George R. Brunk III, dean of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, re-enacted hauling a load of sand to build the Warwick Mennonite Institute which had been proposed by his grandfather George R. Brunk I in 1912. A special program on May 31, 1992, at the Warwick River Mennonite Church in Newport News, Virginia, commemorated the efforts of the evangelist and other conservative Mennonite leaders to begin a school among the eastern Mennonite conferences. The re-enactment program included a son, 89-year-old Truman Brunk Sr., and three grandsons of Brunk I. Eventually a school was established in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Eastern Mennonite College, which on the weekend of October 1-3, 1992, celebrated its 75th anniversary. Photo: Curt Holsopple 

Die Briefe an David Stauffer.

Edited by Enos E. Stauffer. Published by editor, Route 1, Box 805 Verdilla Road, Port Trevorton, PA 17864. 1990. Pp. 752. \$55.00.

David M. Stauffer (minister and bishop) was the oldest son of Jacob

Stauffer, the founder of the Stauffer Mennonites (located in Pennsylvania). This correspondence of David Stauffer, largely in the German language covers the years 1863-1889, and is published in hand-written form, recopied from the original letters by the editor.

The introduction, a biographical

sketch of David Stauffer, and commentary are generally in the English language. This volume is of significance for an understanding of an early important Old Order Mennonite group.

Leonard Gross, Goshen, Indiana 

Catherine J. Miller: A Keen Historical Awareness

By Nate Yoder

Until the highway department posted signs north of Grantsville, Maryland, designating the Peavine Road a few years ago, local residents had long referred to the mile-long stretch on which Catherine Miller lived as "der neu Weg" (the New Road). And that despite the road's being over 60 years old.

But then Catherine herself is better known by another name. Aunt Kate to many besides her seventy-some nieces and nephews and their many offspring, she has been a modern guide to dimming memories of the past.

Kate grew up in a family with keen historical awareness. Born in 1907, her father was Jonas B. Miller, a minister in the Conservative Mennonite congregation of the Casselman River Valley. After her mother Barbara's death in 1923, Kate remained home as her father's housekeeper as her 10 siblings left to begin families of their own. From Jonas, both Kate and her brother Ivan, long-time historian of the Conservative Mennonite Conference, absorbed the oral traditions of the Amish and Mennonite community in the Casselman Valley.

For over 30 years Jonas edited the English section of the *Herold der Wahrheit*, a joint venture of the Old Order Amish and Conservative Mennonites. Frequently Jonas contributed sketches of Mennonite history. Of her father's many correspondents, Kate recalls, "I felt like I knew them." Highlights include the memory of John Horsch visiting her father. Horsch's papers reveal a cordial and candid correspondence between the two men.

Expecting Kate to become a teacher, her father encouraged her to take advantage of opportunities at Yoder School, a local elementary school. Later she would teach at Crossroads, a Christian Day school north of the Mason-Dixon line which passed through the Mennonite community. Informal learning continued at home



*Catherine J. Miller: archivist, translator, missionary, bookbinder, collector, and poet.
Photo: Rachel N. Miller.*

as well.

From conversations between her father and her surveyor brother Floyd, Kate absorbed a detailed knowledge of the land. Tracts such as Cornucopia, Nonpareil, and Strawberry Hill into

which this Appalachian region had been platted for European settlement would become common places in Kate's description of the region's history.

With mid-life came new challenges.

After her father's death in 1952 Kate commuted the 15 miles to Frostburg State College. Then from 1955 to 1964 she accepted an assignment as a missionary to Luxembourg. Here she served with her brother Harvey and his wife Mildred. Vacations in Europe nurtured genealogical interests. In the massive **Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies**, Hugh Gingerich credits Kate for much of the research in tracking families of the Casselman Valley to their German ancestors.

Once back from Europe, Kate set up a business in book repair and binding. L. A. Miller, editor of the German portion of the **Herold der Wahrheit** from Arthur, Illinois, had introduced her father to the craft. When Jonas's fingers became too stiff, he had encouraged his daughter to take up the work.

After returning from Europe, Kate bought the equipment of the late John Harshberger from Scottdale, Pennsylvania. Much of her business came through continued referrals from the Mennonite Publishing House. Researchers and students using durably-bound periodicals in numerous small libraries have Kate to thank. Many family Bibles also became more lasting heirlooms, thanks to Kate's diligence and skill.

With expanding business came a growing reputation for her historical competence. Kate's contributions to the **Casselman Chronicle**, a local historical magazine, preserve much of the oral tradition she had absorbed. She had also mastered German script and frequently translated old documents.

Complementing her book repair was historical collecting. Most significant of the items which made their way to Kate's repository on the New Road was an almsbook begun in the Northkill Amish community of Berks County, Pennsylvania. The booklet then accompanied migrants westward to the Conemaugh district near Johnstown, where additional entries were made.

In 1952, forty-five years after the final entry, Ammon Kaufman of the Conemaugh area gave the record to Joseph Yoder, a guest in his home. Yoder was the Old Order Amish bishop near Meyersdale and a cousin to Kate. Katie Yoder, a perceptive daughter-in-law, later gave the book to

A Prayer for the New Year

By Catherine J. Miller

All our hope and all our comfort
Are in Thee;
Changeless Thou, who wert and art and
Art to be;
Seasons go and seasons come,
Some of joy, of sorrow some,
Turn our hearts, O Father, from
Vanity.


For as grass, as fading flowers
Are we all,
Springing up a while to flourish,
Then to fall;
Herewith are we yet content,
For They hand beneficent
Life, with all its gifts hath lent,
Great and small.

Let our goings be established
Day by day,
Till our days and months and years have
Passed away;
As a story, when 'tis done,
Is our labor 'neath the sun;
Let they beauty be upon
Us, we pray.

Kate for translation. With entries dating from 1768, the almsbook appears to be the oldest surviving document of Amish life in America.¹

Aunt Kate, as archivist, translator, missionary, bookbinder, and collector presents a versatile figure. Still, the portrait remains incomplete. In a family blessed with musicians, writers, visual artists, and mechanical geniuses, Kate wrote poetry. Her father published her work in the *Herold der Wahrheit*, as did Daniel Kauffman and Paul Erb in the *Gospel Herald*.

Her niece Dorcas with her husband Glenn Lehman compiled the poems and songs in both English and German for a delightful volume of 175 pages titled *Pennyroyal* (1980).²

The poem "A Prayer for the New Year" reveals the texture of a faith which gives Kate's historical interest its purpose. The poem was originally published in the *Herold der Wahrheit* of January, 1948, and is reprinted here by permission of the *Pennyroyal* publishers. 

Nate Yoder of Goshen, Indiana, is a native of Grantsville, Maryland, and a doctoral student at the University of Notre Dame.

¹ The almsbook remains part of Kate's collection. Copies of the original and of her translation have circulated among researchers. For further description of the document and a translation prepared by the late Elizabeth Horsch Bender, see Paul V. Hostetler, *The Three Zug (Zook) Brothers of 1742 and their Male Descendants until 1850* (privately published, 1982), 199-207.

² Copies of *Pennyroyal* can be obtained from Della Miller, The Casselman, Grantsville, MD 21536.


Sleeping Preacher John D. Kauffman

Compiled by W. Richard Hassan

Curiosity led us¹ to accept an invitation on last Sunday, from Mr. John Schwin,² to visit Mr. Kauffman, the "sleeping preacher", who lives on Silver street,³ about seven miles southwest of Middlebury. We arrived there early in the evening and had the satisfaction of witnessing the performance from beginning to end. Mr. Kauffman is a very ordinary looking farmer and when we first saw him strolling about the house gaping and yawning and rubbing his eyes, we concluded he was one of the farm hands who had been out on a "lark" the night before or was being attacked with an ague chill.

On being informed that he was the preacher, our speculations changed to interested curiosity, and we watched his every movement with an expectancy far beyond our realization. After wandering about the room for fifteen minutes or more, occasionally sitting down and going through a series of what seemed to be nervous convulsions, he deposited himself on a lounge prepared for the purpose, and passed into a condition of motionless, quiet sleep. Remaining this for some ten minutes his right arm suddenly flew into a perpendicular position where it remained "dead still" for fully fifteen minutes, when he mumbled something in German and bounded to the middle of the floor and commenced preaching. The words rolled from him like a shot out of a bottle. For the first hour his discourse was in the German language, which being all "dutch" to us we received but little spiritual encouragement. Suddenly the language changed to English and showers of meaningless words poured forth for another hour.⁴

Changing again to German he gave us another flood of a half hour duration, when overcome with exhaustion a couple of men carried him to another room and placed him on a bed. The show was over and our curiosity was more than satisfied. We

are not disposed to pronounce Mr. Kauffman a fraud or to insinuate against his honesty in these demonstrations but we are free to confess that we can see no good coming out of them either to himself or to his congregations, as we were informed by one who understands the German language that there was no more sense to that part of his discourse than there was to the English. As these "spells" come on regularly twice a week (Wednesday and Sunday evenings) the year around and have been kept up a number of years, going though the same reigamarole, without deriving any benefits, temporal or spiritual, it must be very monotonous and annoying to his family and friends.⁵ 

Sleeping preachers who emerged in the 1880s among the North American Mennonites continue to fascinate the Mennonite imagination as seen in the title of Julia Kasdorf poems which are to be released this fall (*Sleeping Preacher*, University of Pittsburgh Press). Recently, W. Richard Hassan discovered this account of John D. Kauffman (1847-1913) in the *Middlebury Independent* (June 28, 1888). We are indebted to Hassan, former editor of the Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society journal *Mennonite Heritage*, for the notes and information. For background see W. Richard Hassan, "John D. Kauffman, The Sleeping Preacher, *Mennonite Heritage* 4 (September, 1977): 25, 31-34.

¹ The writer is probably D.A. Rheubottom, editor and printer of *The Middlebury Independent* or his son De Alton Rheubottom, the "junior editor" of the paper.

² John Schwin of Middlebury. John Schwin's daughter, Ida M., was married to De Alton Rheubottom on February 2, 1888.

³ Today, County Road 34.

⁴ For a record of a sleeping preacher's messages which were understood see Melvin Gingerich, "Sleeping Preacher," **Mennonite Historical Bulletin** 32 (January, 1971): 4.

⁵ Although Kauffman fell into disfavor among most of the Indiana Amish Mennonites by the turn of the century, he did have some followers. He and his adherents moved to Shelby County, Illinois, in 1907.

News and Notes

European Mennonite history tours for 1993 include an Anabaptist Mennonite heritage video tour planned for 1993 with **Jan Gleysteen**, **Michael Hostetler**, **Joel Kauffmann** and **Alvin Miller** (219 768-7300) of Shipshewana, Indiana. The group will eventually produce a 30-minute video of Anabaptist beginnings. **Lynn Miller** (513 465-2296) of West Liberty, Ohio, will lead a "Mennonite Storytelling Through Europe" tour July 12-26 and a "Mennonite Historical Explorer Tour" group August 2-17. An "Amish European Heritage Tour" August 16-31 will tie in with the 1693-1993 Amish symposium at Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines (August 19-21). Leaders are **J. Lemar** and **Lois Ann Mast** (215 286-0258) and **Leroy Beachy**. Tourmagination has two tours on "Our European Anabaptist Heritage," June 14-July 1 led by **Arnold** and **Rhoda Cressman** (412 887-6639) and August 2-19 led by **John L. Ruth** and **Wilmer Martin** (519 745-7433).

Bert Friesen has completed two additional volumes of **Mennonitische Rundschau Index**, a subject index for the years 1900 to 1909 and an author's index for the years 1880-1909. Orders for the volumes (\$50.00 plus \$5.00 postage) should be sent to Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 2E5.

North American Mennonite Archivists and Librarians (NAMAL) members were hosted by **Rachel Senner** of Freeman Heritage Archives July 21-23 in conjunction with the triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church at Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The next meeting is planned in conjunction with

the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite meetings at Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30, 1995. **John D. Thiesen** of Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College will host the group.

NAMAL has sponsored the Mennonite Serials Preservation Project to microfilm 52 Mennonite periodicals which began publication before 1920. Some titles, such as **Christian Monitor**, **Gospel Herald**, and **Herald der Wahrheit** (Elkhart, Indiana) are now available. Contact **John D. Roth**, Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.

Mennonite Archives of Ontario at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo has received \$16,900 in grant monies to arrange and describe The **Canadian Mennonite** photo series which consists of approximately 6,000 photos and negatives. **Linda Huebert Hecht** began to process the series in June.

The Mirror of the Martyrs exhibit will be at Bluffton College in Ohio October 25-November 25, and in January and February of 1993 at the new building of Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602.

Dennis Stoesz, archivist of the Mennonite Church at Goshen, Indiana, will be addressing the annual workshop for congregational historians in the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. Stoesz will speak on "Ontario historical resources in the Archives of the Mennonite Church." The meeting will be held on the morning of November 7 at Conrad Grebel College.

John D. Roth, professor of history and religion at Goshen College, has been named editor of **Mennonite Quarterly Review**. The announcement comes with the retirement of **John S. Oyer** who had been editor of the journal since 1966. American Mennonite historian and author **Theron F. Schlabbach** has been named as interim editor for the next year or longer until Roth can assume responsibility for the journal. Since its beginnings in 1927 with Anabaptist scholar Harold S. Bender, the journal has become widely respected as a record in Anabaptist studies, as well as carrying essays on "Anabaptist-Mennonite history, thought, life and affairs." **Mennonite Quarterly Review** is published by the Mennonite Historical Society for Goshen College

and the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.


The J. Winfield Fretz Award for Studies in Ontario Mennonite History has been established by the Ontario Mennonite Historical Society. The award will be offered on three levels: (1) high school, (2) undergraduate, lay historians and (3) graduate students. Prizes begin at \$100 and entries or inquiries should be sent to the editor of **Mennogespräch**, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6.

Lewis M. Coss of Hagerstown, Maryland, is doing a study of historic Mennonite funeral practices in his community, as well as working on the Coss family history.

Ron Mathies of Waterloo, Ontario, and **Robert Kreider** of North Newton, Kansas, have been named co-editors of a project to produce a book for the 75th anniversary of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in 1995. The project planners hope the book will emerge from essays on MCC by a wide variety of Brethren in Christ and Mennonite journals.

December 15, 1992, is the deadline for submitting proposals to present papers at the **Amish Society 1693-1993** conference at Elizabethtown College July 22-25, 1993. Send one-page abstract and resume to **Donald Kraybill**, Young Center, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA 17022.

The MeetingHouse of Harleysville, Pennsylvania, is sponsoring a winter concert series (January 30 and March 27) featuring baroque violinist **Mary Hostetler Hoyt**.

North American Mennonite Brethren at Mid-century (1940-1960) is the focus of a symposium February 4-6, 1993, at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in California. The seminar is sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission and the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies. For details contact **Paul Toews**, Historical Commission, 4824 East Butler, Fresno, CA 93727. 

Mennonite Church Historical Association Fall Meetings

Kalona, Iowa

Friday 7:00 p.m., October 16, 1992
Mennonite Historical Society of
Iowa

Levi Miller: "One Day in the Life of
the Historical Committee and
Archives of the Mennonite Church"
Contact: Lois Gugel 319 656 3732

Chicago, Illinois

Saturday, 9:30 a.m.,
October 24, 1992
P.J. Klem's Restaurant, 800 W.
Ogden in Lyons
Susan Fisher Miller: "Writing the
Goshen College History"
Levi Miller: "Mennonite Church
Historical Association"
Contact: Jim Yordy 708 442 8130

Harrisonburg, Virginia

Saturday, 7:30 a.m., October 31, 1992
Eastern Mennonite College West
Dining Room
Calvin W. Redekop: "Jacob Shenk,
Mennonite Entrepreneur"
Levi Miller: "Mennonite Church
Historical Association"
Contact: Albert Keim 703 433 0543

Hesston, Kansas

Saturday, 8:00 a.m.,
November 14, 1992
Place: Hesston College
James Mininger: "Basic Issues in
Mennonite History"
Levi Miller: "Mennonite Church
Historical Association"
Contact: Marion Bontrager
316 237 4472



Levi Miller

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